



Waterford Township, MI — Master Plan



ADOPTED JULY 22, 2024



**CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF WATERFORD
OAKLAND COUNTY, MICHIGAN**

RESOLUTION REGARDING ADOPTION OF MASTER PLAN

WHEREAS, after preparing a proposed Master Plan pursuant to Public Act 33 of 2008, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act, MCL 125.3801 et.seq., (“MPEA”) the Planning Commission provided it to the Board of Trustees for review and comment and the approval of the distribution of the proposed Master Plan to the required entities.

WHEREAS the Planning Commission held a public hearing upon the expiration of the deadline for comment by the required entities to review the proposed Master Plan, pursuant to the MPEA

WHEREAS the Planning Commission approved the adoption of the Master Plan on the findings and conclusions under the assessment of the information and statements presented in this case by the Township Staff, and members of the public as provided in the MPEA.

WHEREAS the Secretary of the Planning Commission has now submitted a copy of the Master Plan to the Township Board for their confirmation of its adoption as the Master Plan for Waterford Township.

IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Township Board of Trustees hereby confirms the Master Plan as adopted by the Planning Commission as the Master Plan for Waterford Township.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a statement recording this confirmation shall be signed by the Township Clerk and shall be included on the inside of the front or back cover of the Master Plan and future land use map.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Planning Commission shall proceed with submitting copies of the adopted Master Plan to the required entities in accordance with the MPEA.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution is given immediate effect.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this Resolution was adopted by the Charter Township of Waterford Board of Trustees at a regular meeting on July 22, 2024.

Charter Township of Waterford

7/23/2024
Date

Kimberly F. Markee
Kimberly F. Markee, Township Clerk

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Owing to its name, Waterford Township's frontage on 34 inland lakes, including scenic Cass Lake, Elizabeth Lake, and Watkins Lake, underpins the quality of life for residents and provides a residential setting unique among communities in southeast Michigan. The Township was first organized in 1834 shortly after the establishment of Oakland County in 1819.

The Township grew rapidly during the middle of the 20th Century as the Detroit metropolitan region expanded outward, yet the growth leveled off towards the end of the century as much of Township's land became developed. In 2023, the Township has just over 72,800 residents, a figure which has remained relatively stable since 2000. Though the Township continues to provide a high-quality setting that locals value, much of the housing stock and commercial corridors developed in the middle of the 20th century show signs of aging. Recognizing its exceptional natural assets, Waterford Township is uniquely positioned to further enhance the community by building on its unique qualities and providing high-quality housing and recreational opportunities for residents and visitors alike.

The Waterford Township Master Plan is a long-term guide for the growth, improvement, development, and redevelopment within the Township. Prior to this plan, the Township's most recent Master Plan was adopted in 2003 and established policies to build the local economy, expand recreation, and protect the environment. The Township decided to update the plan to ensure that officials and staff have a strong policy foundation to guide the community as it changes and develops over the next 20 years. To do this, the plan contains policies, goals, and objectives that direct future growth and development and establish the groundwork for the Township's zoning and development regulations.

ABOUT THE PLAN

This section describes the statutory context for the Master Plan, as defined in the State of Michigan's statutes. This section also describes the requirements for Master Plans set by state statute and describes the plan's organization by Chapter.

State Master Plan Requirements

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act, enacted by the state of Michigan, requires local governments to develop a Master Plan to guide development within its jurisdiction over a timeframe of 20 years or more. This act sets the statutory requirements that all Master Plans in Michigan, including this plan, must meet. The Act requires that a master plan include maps, plats, charts, and other descriptive materials that show recommendations for physical development within the planning jurisdiction. The statute requires that Master Plan also contain a classification and allocation of land for agriculture, residences, commerce, industry, recreation, and other uses.

Plan Organization

The Waterford Township Master Plan addresses how the community will grow and redevelop, how residents will travel, and the locations for future recreational sites. The Plan includes the following chapters.

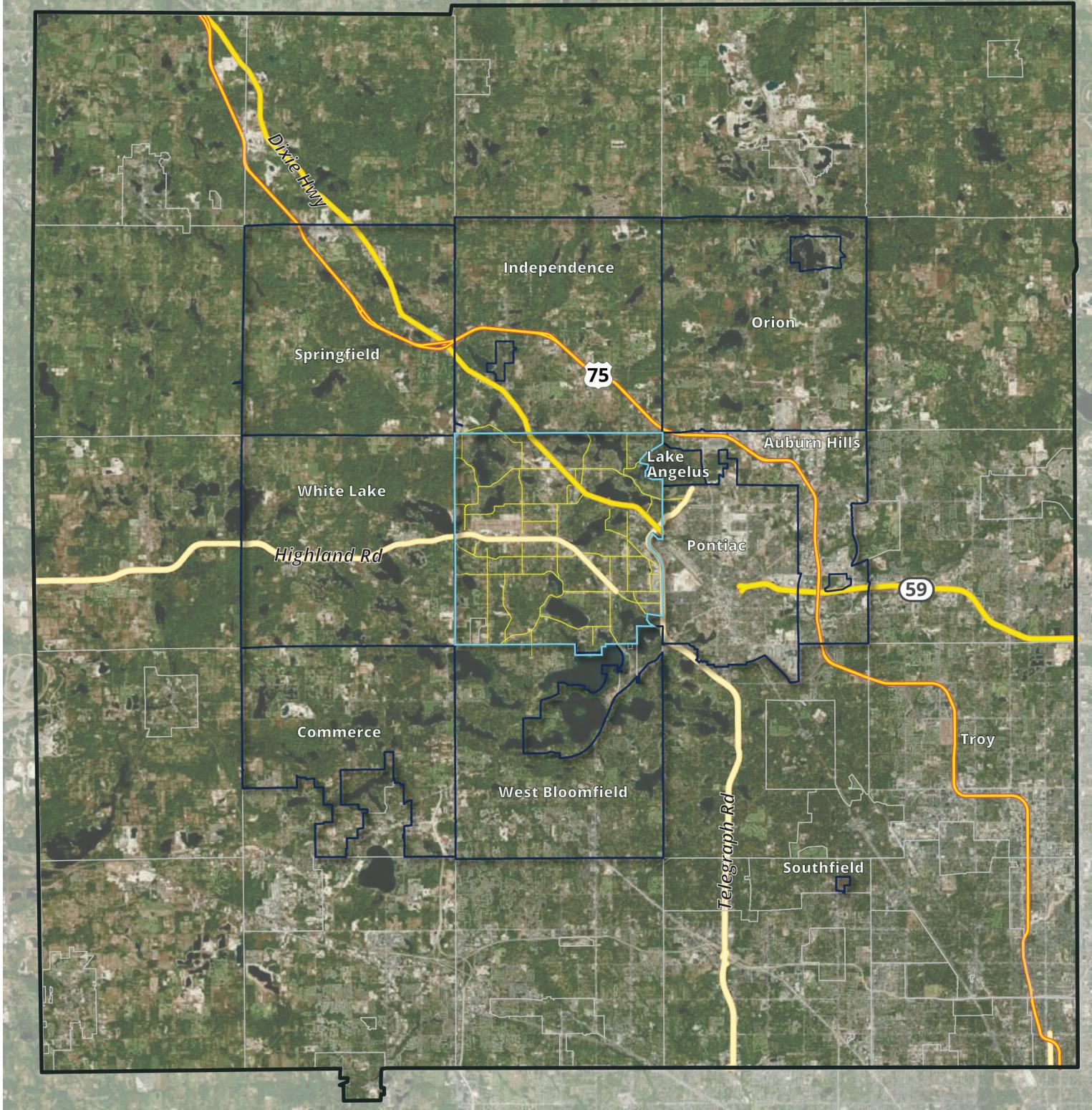
- **Introduction.** Establishes the role and organization of the Master Plan, highlights key demographic and housing trends that influence the Township's issues and opportunities, and describes the community's previous planning efforts that can inform the policies and recommendations in the Master Plan.
- **Community Outreach.** Describes the community engagement efforts as part of the Master Plan and highlights the issues, and opportunities defined by stakeholders during these activities.
- **A Vision for Waterford.** Defines a vision statement that provides an overarching vision for how the Township should grow and change and establishes goals that guide the principles of the rest of the Master Plan.
- **Land Use Plan.** Describes the types of uses and development that should be located throughout the community and how the Township should grow and change.
- **Residential Areas Plan.** Establishes specific policy statements and objectives for different residential areas within the Township.
- **Commercial and Industrial Areas Plan.** Establishes specific policy objectives for different commercial and industrial areas within the Township.

- **Parks, Recreation, and Natural Resources.** Describes the Township's parks, recreational facilities, and natural resources and establishes how these amenities can be diversified and improved to enhance the community's access to natural resources.
- **Drayton Plains Subarea Plan.** Describes specific development patterns, built characteristics, and physical improvements for the Downtown Center in the Drayton Plains subarea on Dixie Highway.
- **Transportation.** Describes the road network, nonmotorized infrastructure, and other transportation assets and describes how the transportation network can be diversified to improve community.
- **Community Facilities and Infrastructure.** Inventories the community's infrastructure and services provided by public, semi-public, and private entities and establishes recommendations to coordinate these facilities and services with the Township's growth.
- **Implementation.** Provides strategic guidance on how the Master Plan should be put into action and how impacts can be assessed over the next 20 years.

REGIONAL CONTEXT

Waterford Township comprises 35 square miles of land in the geographic center of Oakland County. The Township is in the northwest portion of the Detroit metropolitan area. The cities of Lake Angelus, Pontiac, and Auburn Hills are to the Township's east, while Commerce and West Bloomfield Townships are to the south, all of which are more urbanized. Springfield, Independence, and Orion Townships are to the north and White Lake Township is to the west. Dixie Highway, M-59, and Telegraph Road traverse the Township and connect it with other communities in the region. Employment centers are located within driving distance to the east and south in Troy, Southfield, and Auburn Hills. Interstate 75 is immediately north of the community and provides vehicular access to commercial centers in Downtown Detroit and Flint. The Township also holds a presence in the region through the Oakland County International Airport, which provides air freight and passenger service and contributes over \$1 billion to the County's economy annually.

Regional Context



County Boundary

Adjacent Municipalities

Roads

Interstate

Regional Arterial

Waterford Boundary

Surrounding Municipalities

Highway

Primary Roads - Waterford

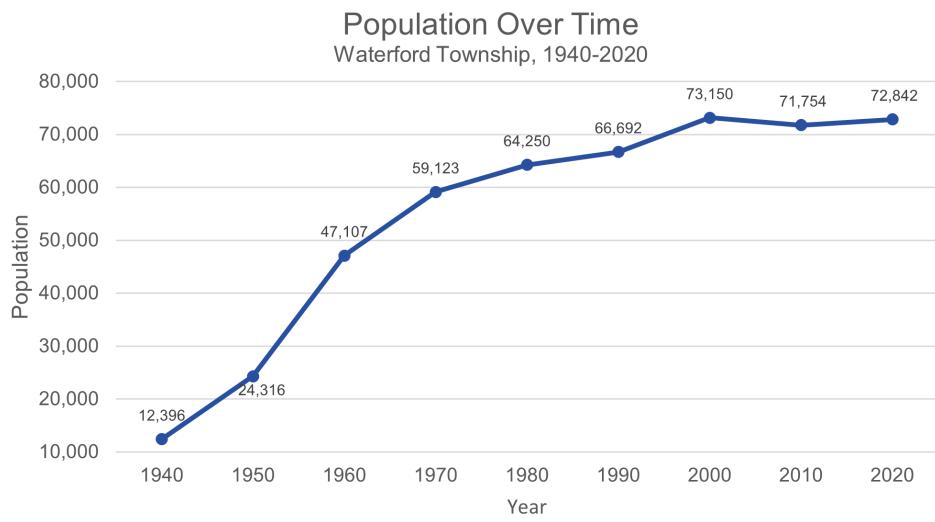
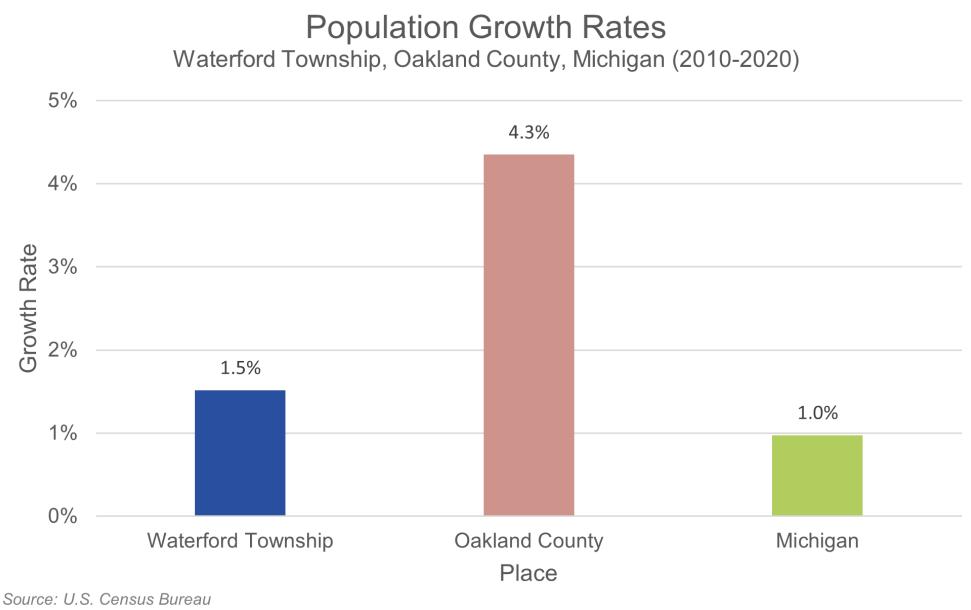
COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT

The demographic snapshot summarizes the existing characteristics and recent trends of Waterford Township's population. This community snapshot informed the development of the Master Plan, ensuring that its goals, objectives, policies, and land use plan are founded on an understanding of recent growth trends, issues, and opportunities. Where appropriate, Waterford Township has been compared to Oakland County and the State of Michigan to provide context. The data used in the snapshot is from the American Community Survey and US Decennial Census and is cited under each graph or chart.

Population

Waterford Township's population grew rapidly beginning in 1940, though its population growth has leveled off over the past 20 years.

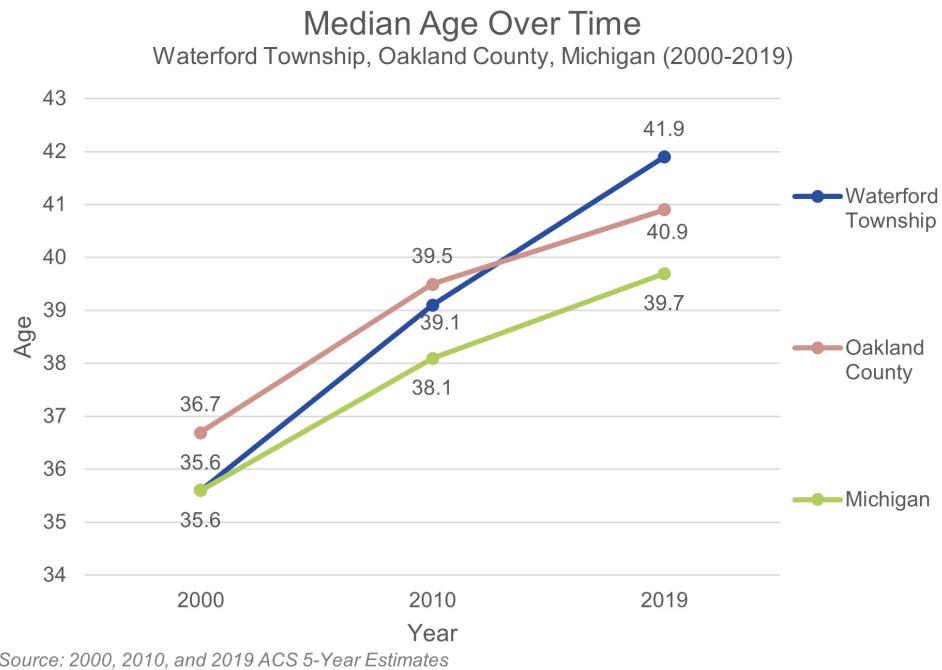
According to the US Decennial Census, the population of Waterford Township is 72,842. Waterford Township's population grew by 1.5% between 2010 and 2020, and has remained stable since 2000. By comparison, Oakland County's population increased by 4.3% in the same timeframe, while Michigan's population grew by 1%.



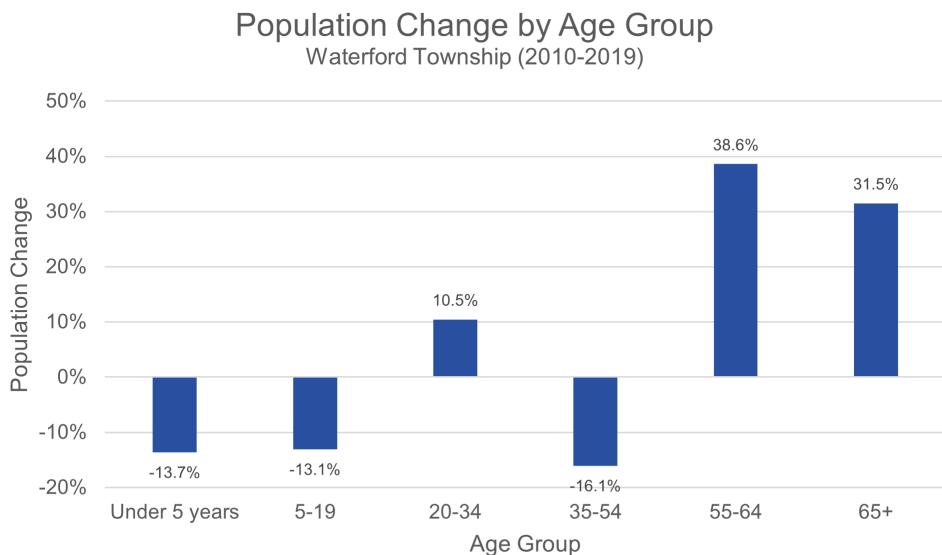
Age

Waterford Township's population is aging, as its median age increased by almost three years over the past 10 years.

The 2019 median age of residents in Waterford Township was 41.9. The median age increased by 2.8 years since 2010 and 6.3 years since 2000. The 2019 median age of Waterford Township is one year older than the median age of Oakland County (40.9) and over two years older than the median age of Michigan (39.7).

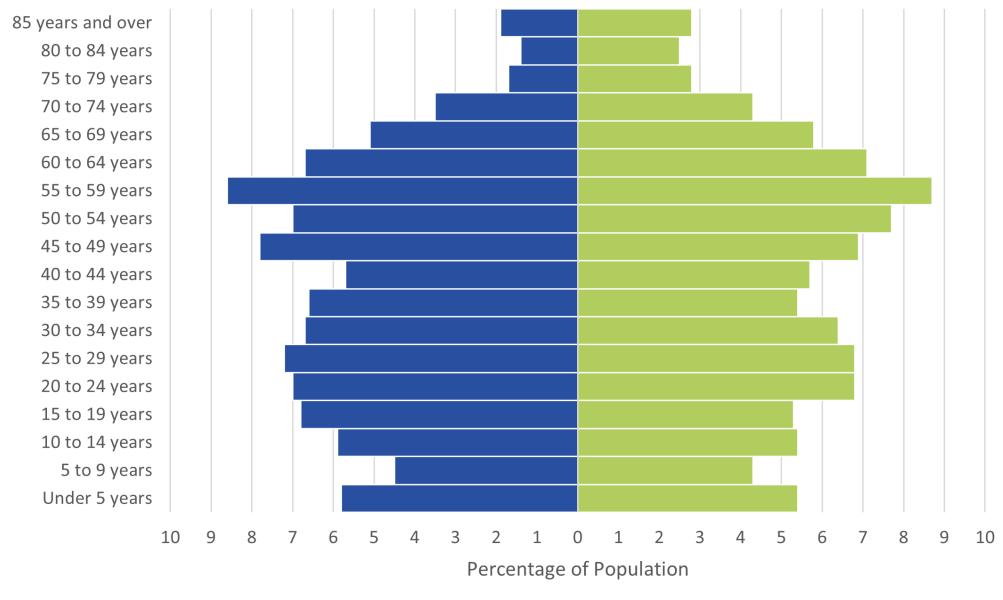


From 2010 to 2019, the age group that experienced the highest growth was the 55 to 64 year old age group, as it increased by 38.6%. From 2010 to 2019, the age group that experienced the greatest decline was the 35 to 54 age group, as it declined by 16.1%. The 55 and older age group experienced the greatest increase in its population from 2010 to 2019.



Source: 2010 and 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates

As of 2019, a large share of the Township's population was at or nearing the retirement age range. In that year, 17.4% of the population was between 55 and 59 years old. This comprised the largest of any five-year-increment age ranges shown in the population pyramid.



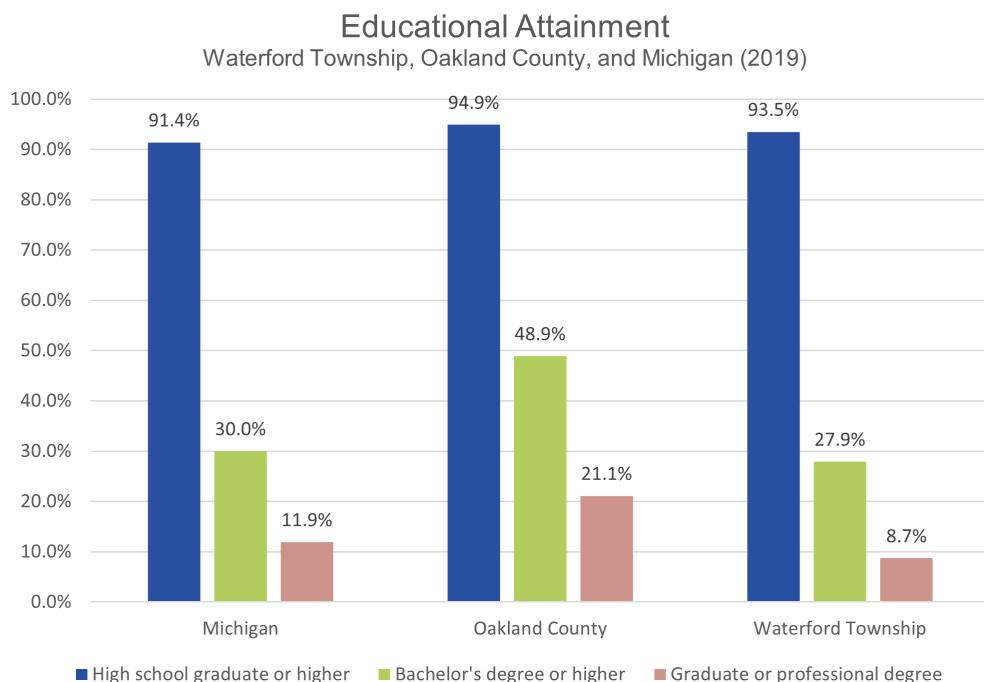
Source: 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates

■ FEMALES ■ MALES

Income and Education

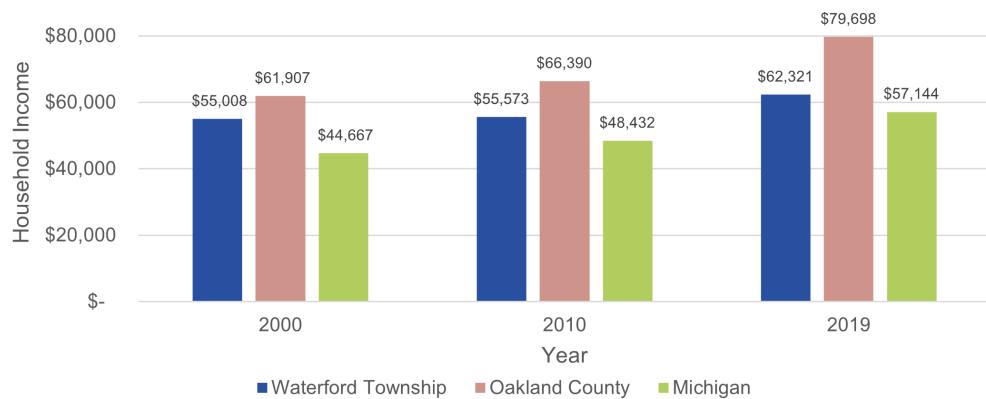
The median household income in Waterford Township has grown modestly from 2000 to 2019 but remains below the 2019 median household income for Oakland County and slightly above the 2019 median household income for Michigan.

The educational attainment graph shows that though attainment of high school education was similar in Waterford Township to Oakland County and Michigan overall, higher educational attainment was lower in the Township than in the two larger geographies. The share of individuals with at least a Bachelor's degree was lower in Waterford Township (27.9%) than in Oakland County overall (48.9%) and the State of Michigan (30.0%), as was the share of individuals with a Graduate or Professional degree in the Township (8.7%) compared with the County (21.1%) and State (11.9%).



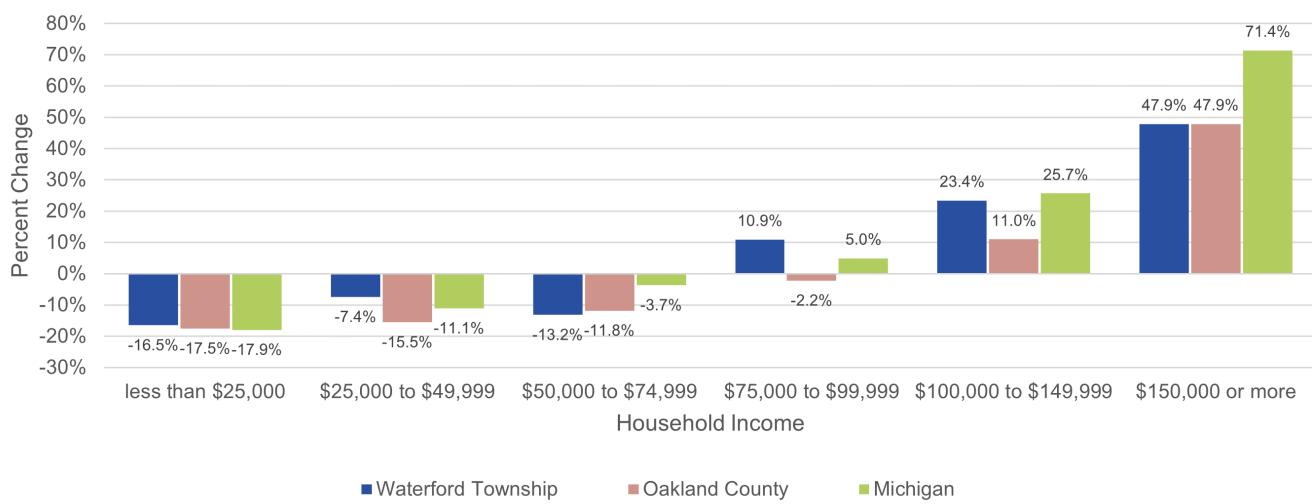
The median household income was \$62,321 in Waterford Township. This is \$17,377 lower than Oakland County's median household income and \$5,177 more than the State of Michigan's median household income. Although the median household income in the Township was relatively stagnant between 2000 and 2010, the figure increased by 12.1% between 2010 and 2019, perhaps coinciding with the area's economic recovery from the Great Recession. The Change in Household Income graph shows that the number of moderate-income households earning between \$75,000 and \$149,999 annually grew, as did the number of upper-income households making \$150,000 or more annually.

Median Household Income
Waterford Township, Oakland County, Michigan (2000-2019)



Source: 2000, 2010, and 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Change in Household Income
Waterford Township, Oakland County, Michigan (2010-2019)



Source: 2010 and 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates

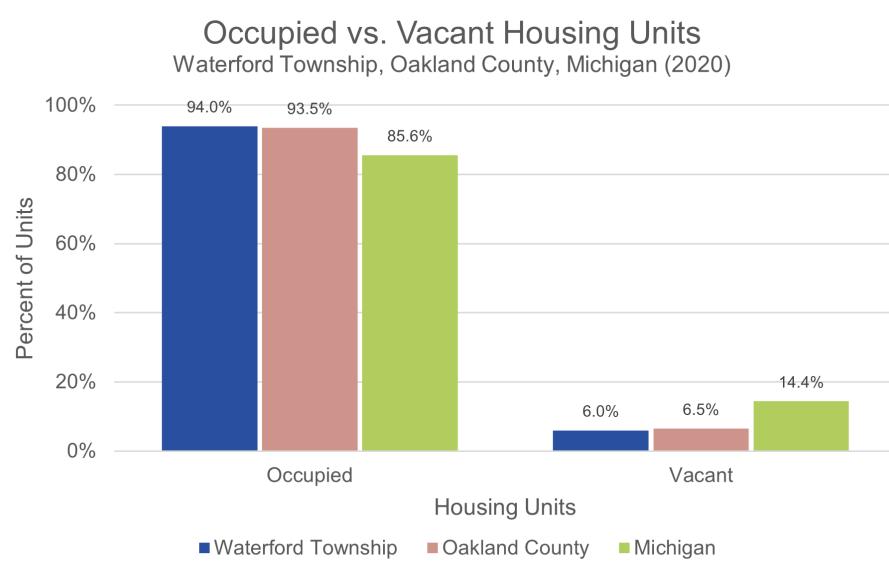
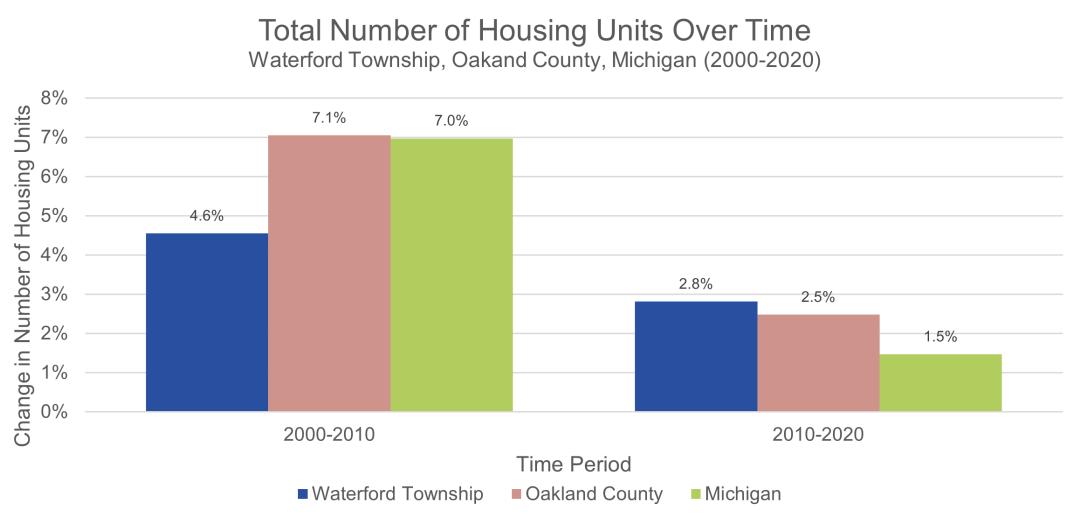
Housing

Waterford Township's housing stock predominantly consists of owner-occupied, single-family homes, similar to Oakland County and Michigan.

Housing Units

Waterford Township has a total of 32,659 housing units, which is a 2.8% increase in the total number since 2010. Waterford Township experienced a higher growth in housing units from 2010 to 2020 compared to its peer communities but fell behind new housing units being built from 2000 to 2010.

Of its 32,659 housing units, 94% of the housing units in Waterford Township are occupied, which is 0.5 percentage points more than the occupied housing units in Oakland County and 8.4 percent higher than the occupied housing units in Michigan.

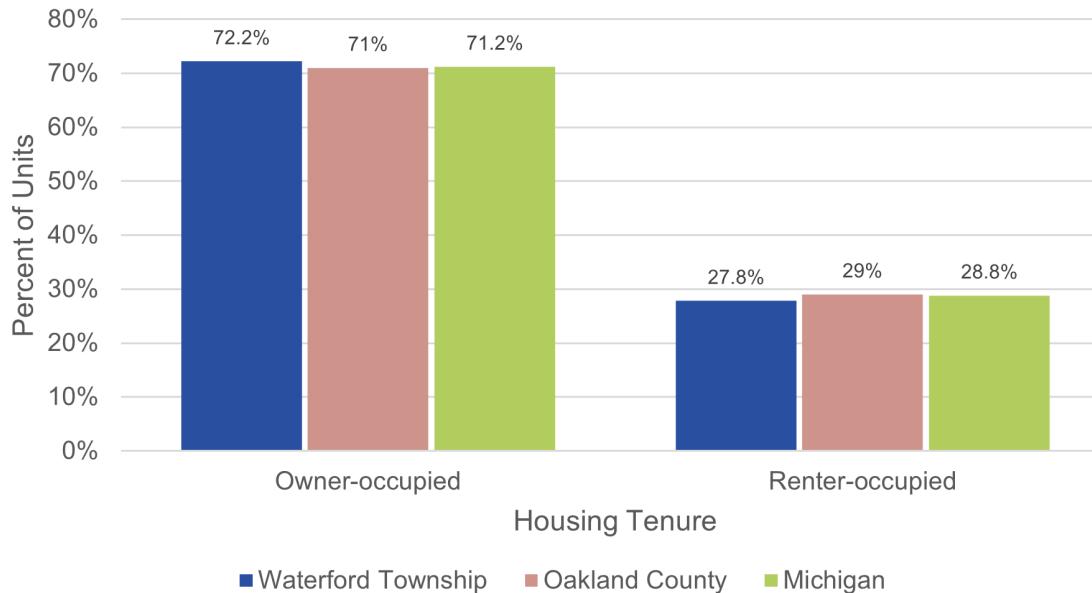


Source: 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Housing Tenure

Housing tenure refers to households owning or renting the housing units they reside in. In Waterford Township, 72.2% of the housing units are owner-occupied and 27.8% of the housing units are renter-occupied. This is in line with the housing tenure of Oakland County and Michigan.

Owner vs. Renter-Occupied Housing Units Waterford Township, Oakland County, Michigan (2019)

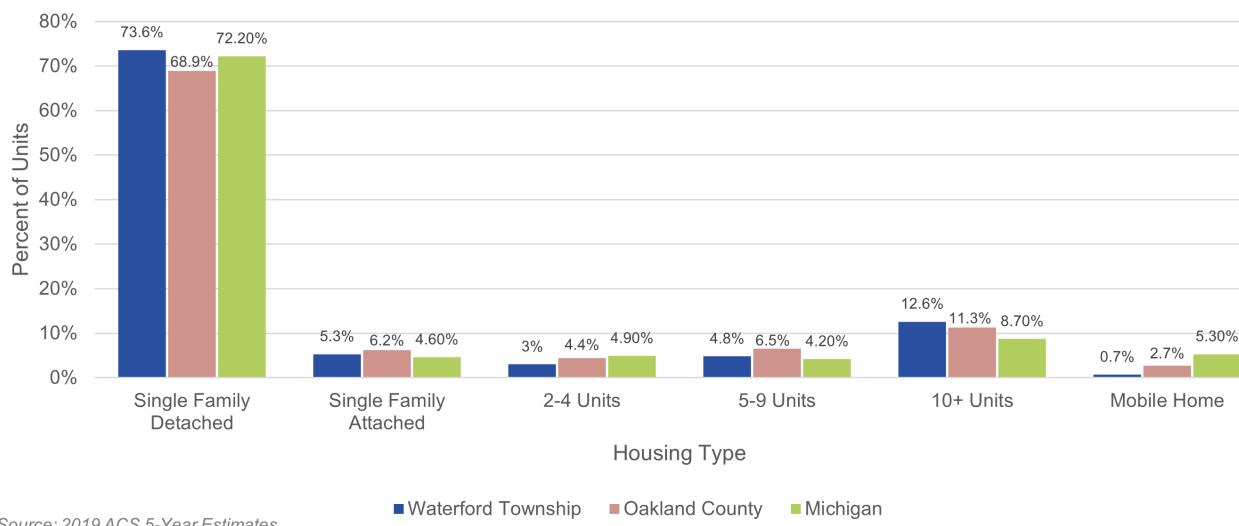


Source: 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Housing Type

Waterford Township's housing stock consists of 73.6% single-family detached homes, which is 4.7 percent larger share than Oakland County's share of single family detached housing units and 1.4 percentage points higher than Michigan's. Waterford Township has a lower share of residents residing in mobile homes (0.7%) than Oakland County (2.7%) and Michigan (5.3%). The proportion of residents in multifamily buildings (two or more units) is 20.4% in Waterford Township, 22.2% in Oakland County, and 17.8% in

Housing Type Waterford Township, Oakland County, Michigan (2019)



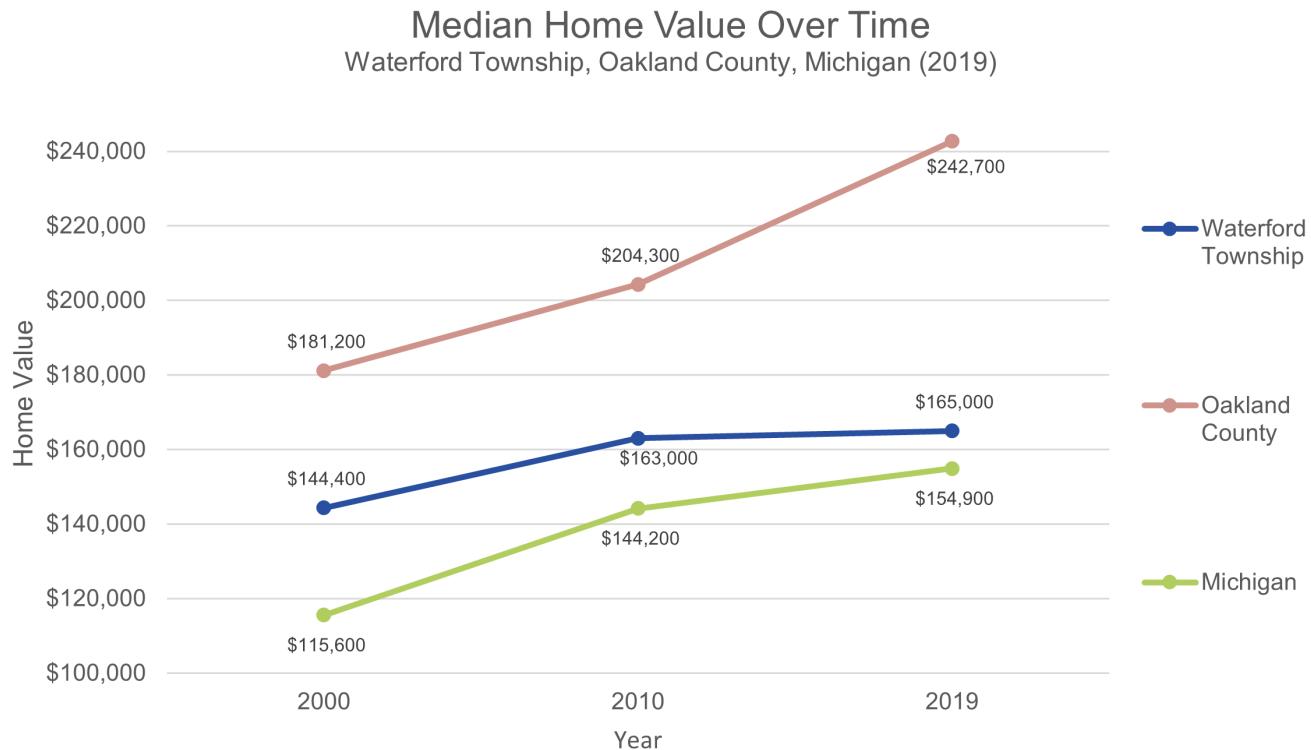
Source: 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates

■ Waterford Township ■ Oakland County ■ Michigan

Michigan.

Home Value

The median home value in Waterford Township is \$165,000, which is \$77,700 less than the median home value in Oakland County (\$242,700) and \$10,100 more than the median home value in Michigan (\$154,900). The median home value in Waterford Township



Source: 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates

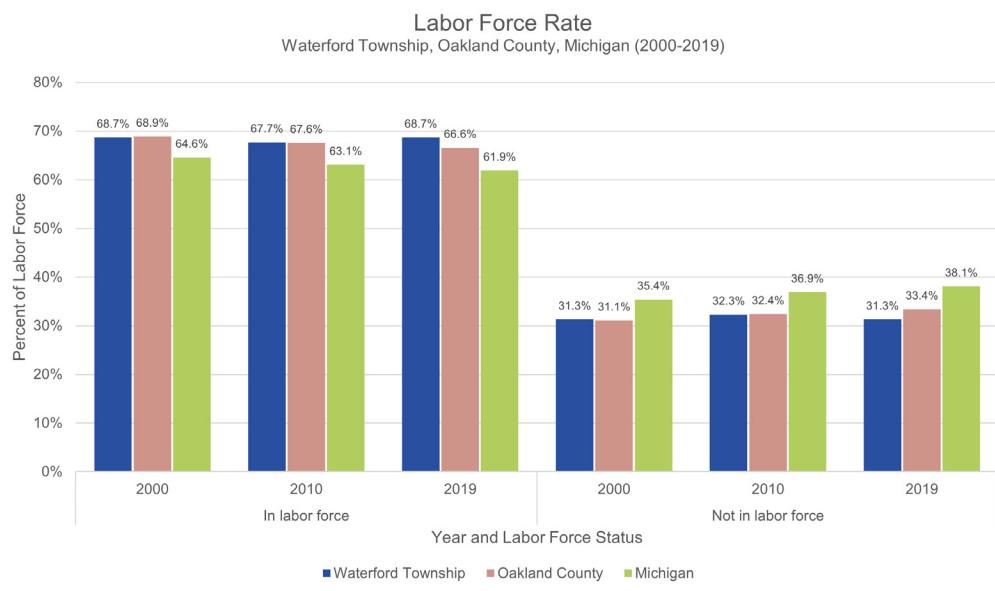
grew by 1.2% from 2010 to 2019 and by 14.3% from 2000 to 2019.

Employment

The labor force rate in Waterford Township has been steady from 2000 to 2019, with a similar labor force rate as Oakland County. Public Administration is the largest sector within Waterford Township.

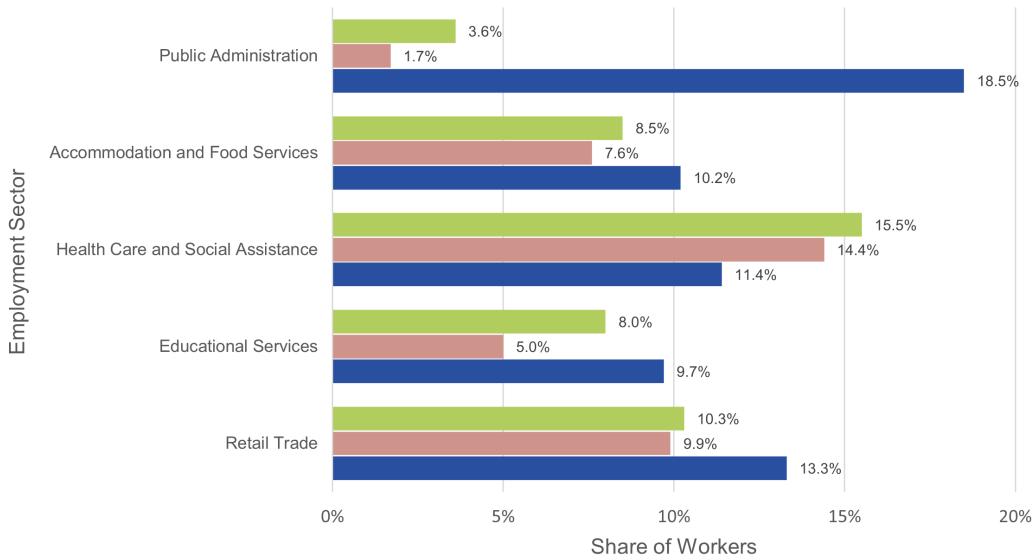
The labor force rate of Waterford Township has been consistent since 2000. According to the 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates, the labor force rate of Waterford Township is 68.7%, which is 2.1 percentage points higher than the population in the labor force in Oakland County (66.6%) and 6.8 percentage points higher than the population in the labor force in Michigan (61.9%). The Waterford Township labor force has remained consistent from 2000 to 2019 as the population in the labor force increased slightly by 1 percentage point from 2010 to 2019.

The five largest sectors in Waterford Township are Public Administration, Retail Trade, Health Care and Social Assistance, Accommodation and Food Services, and Educational Services in terms of the number of residents employed by sector. The largest sector in Waterford Township is Public Administration - 18.5% of the Township's population is employed in the sector. The second highest industry sector in Waterford Township is the Retail Trade sector with 13.3% of the population employed in the industry.



Source: 2000, 2010, and 2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates

Largest Industry Sector in Waterford Township In Comparison with Oakland County and Michigan, 2019



PAST PLANS AND STUDIES

Waterford Township conducted numerous planning efforts in the past that are important to consider during the Master Planning process. The Master Plan seeks to build on these previously adopted plans and studies and ensure existing community policies and goals are integrated within the Master Plan where they are relevant to consider.

Waterford Township Comprehensive Development Plan Update Brochure (1968)

The Comprehensive Plan Brochure was a condensed version of the update of the 1966 Comprehensive Development Plan. The main goals of the update address an expansion of utility systems and services including water supply, storm sewers, sanitary sewers, and refuse disposal; a need for community facilities including schools, recreational, governmental, and library facilities, fire protection, hospitals, and land use planning.

Focal Area Plans (1988)

The 1988 Focal Area Plan was written prior to the upcoming comprehensive plan update with the previous plan being the 1975 Comprehensive Development Plan. The plan encouraged and promoted new and innovative office/commercial development, redevelopment, and quality design at seven designated focal areas. The plan also examined the implications for transportation, environmental, zoning, and density.

1. **Oakland Airport.** Highland Road at Oakland Airport
2. **Triangle.** Walton Boulevard, Sashabaw Road, and Dixie Highway intersections
3. **Town Corners.** Highland Road at Crescent Lake Road
4. **Meijer.** Highland Road at Pontiac Lake Road
5. **Intersection.** Cass Lake Road, Highland Road, and Elizabeth Road intersections
6. **Regional Center.** Elizabeth Lake Road and Pontiac Lake Road at Telegraph Road (Summit Place Mall)
7. **Gateway.** Telegraph Road at Dixie Highway

Master Plan for Future Land Use (1991)

The 1991 Master Plan was adopted with the goal of making Waterford a more desirable community for residents. The plan outlined ten goals highlighting land use, community preservation and engagement, preservation of natural land, infrastructure development, and improved physical aesthetics. The plan considered environmental impacts and preservation focused on waterbodies, wetlands, groundwater, woodlots, trees, and waste processing. Other main focuses included improving the commercial and industrial economic base, enhancing transportation, and improving administrative and public community facilities.

Charter Township of Waterford Master Plan (2003)

The Waterford Master Plan was adopted in January 2003 and outlines seven major goals to accomplish between 2003 and 2023, which focused on local economic development, sustainable land use, the wellbeing of and recreational opportunities for Township citizens, the improvement of transportation and walkability, and the retention of the Township's unique character and qualities. Key stakeholders noted that Waterford's main issues were a lack of development planning, aesthetic guidelines, and traffic congestion along the Township's commercial corridors. Stakeholders also established a desire for stronger communication among governmental agencies, an improved and expanded nonmotorized path system, greater walkability, and the need for a central community center with activities for Township youth.

The future land use plan helps define the types of desired land uses and developments in the Township. It identified locations for multiple-family development dispersed throughout the community, often to serve as transitions between single-family neighborhoods and commercial corridors. Further, the future land use plan proposed a Central Community Business District along M-59 to include office, commercial, and residential uses to serve as a central focal point within the community with an emphasis on streetscaping and walkability. The Plan also allocated land for high-tech services uses along Dixie Highway and Telegraph Road and for an Urban Business land use designation along M-59 near the Township's eastern border to include small-lot development and a mix of local and community businesses as well as multifamily residential uses.

Waterford Township Planned Destination Area Vision Plan (2007)

The Planned Destination Area (PDA) Vision Plan provides recommendations for land uses that expand on the objectives and policies of the Waterford Township Planned Destination Area. The goal of the Vision Plan is to shape the regulatory and private development process of the PDA and to create a successful, economically viable, socially useful, unique, and environmentally sound place. The PDA is located on the east side of Waterford Township adjacent to the City of Pontiac and the Oakland County seat. In 2003 the community created a Vision for their future and defined a PDA along Telegraph and Elizabeth Lake Roads. The plan builds on that Vision with site information, community workshops, and PDA recommendations and implementation.

Waterford Township Parks and Recreation Plan (2019)

The 2019 Parks and Recreation Plan is a five-year plan written with the purpose of improving recreation facilities and developing new recreational opportunities for the community. The plan includes community input to determine which parks and recreation facilities to improve and how to do so. It also identifies potential funding sources. The main goals of the plan are to develop new amenities and improvements, provide recreation opportunities that improve health and fitness, develop non-motorized pathways, maintain all existing facilities and access to rivers, promote awareness of recreational opportunities, and improve accessibility to all recreational facilities.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

Based on the data examined above, the following are key takeaways influencing the policies of this Master Plan:

- **Population Has Plateaued.** Waterford Township's population growth has leveled off since 2000, and recently little population change has occurred since 2010.
- **An Aging Population.** The Township's population has aged over recent years at a similar rate to the state and County; the median age has increased steadily since 2000, while the number of residents between 55-64 years of age grew the fastest of any group.
- **Lower Rates of Higher Educational Attainment.** Though high-school educational rates are on-par with the County and State overall, rates of higher-educational attainment were lower in Waterford Township than in the two larger geographies.
- **Slowing Housing Construction.** Though some new housing was constructed in the Township between 2010-2019, housing construction has been relatively slow since 2000.
- **Predominance of Single-Family Detached Housing.** As is the case in Oakland County and in Michigan overall, most Waterford Township's housing is single-family detached units. Some large multifamily developments with 10+ units exist as well, and very few small-scale multifamily developments with 2-9 units exist.
- **Moderate Increase in Home Values.** Median home values have increased slightly since 2000 in the Township, however, the increase in average home values has slowed since 2010.
- **Service-Based Economy.** Services, including professional services such as public administration, healthcare, and education as well as retail and accommodation/food services comprise the most common forms of employment among residents.
- **Regional Position.** Waterford's combination of lakes and natural areas located on the edge of the Detroit metro area provide a unique opportunity for residents to enjoy nature while benefiting from the everyday convenience of city life and close proximity to job opportunities.

CHAPTER 2

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The Master Plan process involved extensive outreach to various groups in the community, including residents, elected and appointed officials, Township staff, and other local individuals. This section describes the groups in Waterford Township that participated in the public outreach efforts and the activities that were used to engage them.

JOINT PLANNING COMMISSION, ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS, AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

On Wednesday, May 18, 2022, Waterford Township hosted a joint meeting between the Planning Commission, Township Board, and Zoning Board of Appeals at Waterford Township Hall to discuss the master plan process. In addition to staff, the consultant team, and members of the public, a total of thirteen commission members attended this meeting to provide input. Each attendee was given a worksheet prompting them to identify the top five issues or concerns confronting the Township. The group was also asked to prioritize these issues or concerns, identify three specific projects or actions they would like to see undertaken, and indicate the primary strengths and assets of Waterford.

The main issues participants identified relating to commercial growth and redevelopment were blighted and undermaintained buildings and no downtown district or business corridor. Discussion produced suggestions to enhance corridors, build gateways, and develop Waterford as a destination. The main issues relating to transportation included a lack of walkability and bike-friendliness and the need to improve existing infrastructure such as roads and streetscapes. The main strengths of Waterford that participants identified were its lakes and waterfront, citizens and residents, parks, the airport, and fire and emergency services.

VISIONING WORKSHOP

On Thursday, May 19, 2022, Waterford Township hosted a Community Visioning Workshop open to all residents to discuss the Waterford Township Master Plan. Fifty members of the community attended the workshop, which was held to give residents and stakeholders a chance to discuss ideas and provide input. The input received from this workshop and other outreach activities informed the goals and policies in the Waterford Township Master Plan. The workshop began with an interactive group mapping exercise where participants broke out into six focus groups containing 6-10 individuals. Each focus group identified areas of opportunity and areas of concern within the Township. Topics were provided to guide each table's discussion. Following the group exercise, each focus group was then asked to provide a vision statement based on the group exercise. The workshop concluded with each group presenting their vision statement and map to the larger group.

All groups identified developing a downtown as an important opportunity, with a potential location along Dixie Highway between Sashabaw Road and Shoreline Boulevard. In addition, participants expressed a desire to develop smaller downtown nodes, improve existing corridors, limit disruptive commercial uses, promote new unique commercial uses, and develop community gateways along major roads and community boundaries. Groups agreed that residential neighborhoods should be preserved but with improvements to their physical appearance. The inclusion of new housing in these existing neighborhoods produced split opinions. Most groups did not envision major industrial growth and agreed that heavy industrial use should be limited. A major point participants emphasized was the need for a cohesive network of pedestrian and bicycle facilities, especially throughout commercial areas and parks. Road improvements were noted as necessary and many groups emphasized the need for improvements to their physical condition, safety, and appearance. Groups identified parks and waterfront areas as key strengths of Waterford that should be maintained and improved. Finally, groups expressed the need for a new or renovated community center and a more integrated school system.

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Confidential focus group discussions were conducted to identify existing conditions and potential opportunities within the Waterford community. Residents, business owners, and stakeholders from Waterford were asked to provide unique and direct insight into the community. Focus group discussions were conducted in person in May 2022. Discussions were framed around a sequence of questions regarding the community and conducted in a conversational style. Six focus groups were formed comprising of individuals from nonprofit and service-provider organizations, at-large residents, restaurant owners and operators, lakefront property owners, and commercial and industrial business owners.

PROJECT WEBSITE

A project website was created to support the planning process and keep the public updated on the project's progress. It included background information about the Plan, project news and updates, meeting dates, documents, and online engagement tools. The website remained active throughout the development of the Waterford Township Master Plan and acted as a virtual hub for information and engagement opportunities.

Community Questionnaire

The Waterford Township Community Questionnaire was created with the purpose of collecting responses from community members to help inform the Waterford Township Master Plan and other community decisions. The survey received 122 responses from community members between April 11 and July 18, 2022. It asked questions relating to housing and residential areas, commercial and industrial areas, community services and facilities, transportation, parks and recreation, image and identity, top strengths and weaknesses, and the business community.

Map.Social

Map.Social is an online mapping tool that allows participants to pinpoint issues and opportunities within the City on their own personalized map. Points can be used to identify Waterford's assets and opportunities, such as community assets, priority development sites, new bike routes and paths, and desired uses and developments. Points can also identify issues in the Township, such as problematic intersections, poor building appearance, and public safety concerns.

A total of 199 points were marked on the map with comments. Users noted that development is needed along Dixie Highway east of Watkins Lake Road, as well as the Highland Road area between Crescent Lake Road and Pontiac Lake Road.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH KEY THEMES

Several reoccurring themes emerged from the input garnered during the initial community outreach phase of the planning process. The most frequently cited ideas from participants are summarized below.

Maintain and Improve Housing Quality and Appearance

Existing residential neighborhoods should be preserved but their quality and visual character should be improved. A main issue associated with housing was the presence of many blighted homes throughout Waterford that are not well-maintained. It was suggested that codes could be better enforced to ameliorate blight, building deterioration, and poorly maintained lawns. The construction of new housing produced differing ideas, but many commenters considered new multi-family development as appropriate when mixed with commercial uses and located in specific areas of the Township, such as on underutilized commercial sites. There was also a desire to maintain greenspace around neighborhoods.

Drayton Plains Subarea

Currently there is no centralized downtown district and some community members expressed they would like to see this along Dixie Highway between Sashabaw Road and Shoreline Boulevard. Landscaping aesthetics could accent this area to make it a destination.

Commercial and Industrial

Commercial and industrial corridors need enhanced aesthetics and buildings that are blighted need to be improved and maintained. Community members identified weaknesses in the character of Dixie Highway and Highland Road. They provide access to everyday goods and services, but the corridor's aesthetics are a little lacking and the layout and design of the sites could be updated. The development of retail stores, high-end grocery stores, water recreation areas, personal services, local restaurants, hotels, entertainment, office and business areas, and mixed-use areas was identified as a positive. Storage condominiums, gas stations, and industrial were identified as negative development uses. An emphasis was placed on improving current infrastructure before starting any new development.

Community Services and Facilities

Overall, community services were rated as a strength among participants. Community members think the school system, especially the high school, could be better integrated within the community. They also noted the need for a new community center as well as additional recreational programming and facilities for youth.

Transportation

Many participants believe the Township's transportation infrastructure could be improved, especially in neighborhoods. There is a lack of public transit, sidewalks, and bicycle infrastructure. There was a large emphasis on sidewalks being added to residential and downtown areas. There are also problems with traffic flow and congestion, as an automobile is primarily the only way to get around. Participants also noted a need to improve travel safety for drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

Parks and Recreation

A big strength of Waterford are its parks and lakes. Community members thought that parks could include more amenities and be better maintained. There is also a lack of smaller neighborhood parks. Some community members wished there were more public lakes, while others wished to preserve their private lakes. It was emphasized that there should be better preservation of open greenspace and parks and several participants expressed a desire to expand trails and nonmotorized access.

Image and Identity

A lack of image and identity was considered one of the greatest weaknesses of the community. Neighborhoods, commercial corridors, landscaping, historic sites, arts and cultural amenities, community centers, entry points, could have a better connected image, while community events and festivals were identified as opportunities to improve Waterford's sense of community. Critically, with no community center or downtown area, residents felt that Waterford was just a passthrough and not a destination.

CHAPTER 3

A VISION FOR WATERFORD

The Vision Statement is an aspirational narrative that paints a picture of what the Township can achieve following the adoption of the Waterford Township Master Plan. The Vision Statement depicts the community's collective desires and serves as the foundation for the Plan's goals, recommendations, and actions.

VISION STATEMENT

In 2040, Waterford Township will be a unique destination in Southeast Michigan that is known for its multitude of lakes, wetlands and, unique parklands. The Township's evolving commercial corridors and Drayton Plains district create a vibrant food, shopping, and service scene, while diverse and high-quality residential areas and lake amenities makes Waterford Township an attractive place to live, work, and recreate.

The Township will retain its single-family neighborhoods while fostering a diversity of housing that enhances the community's visual character and image. New townhome and senior living options will be strategically added to ensure the availability of housing to suit all needs. New mixed-use developments located at key locations throughout the Township provide housing options above commercial uses.

The Township's population will be supported by an evolving mix of places to shop, dine, and get together. Through the Township's investment in infrastructure and the strategic repositioning of commercial properties, a new town center will emerge along Dixie Highway at Frembes Road. This area will serve as a pedestrian-friendly "downtown" district with a unique mix of housing, retail, and entertainment offerings. Meanwhile, Dixie Highway, Highland Road, and other major corridors will continue to accommodate a mix of visually appealing retail and service establishments that increase the community's range of goods and services. The health of these corridors will be improved with the addition of housing in areas where distressed commercial properties were previously predominant, supporting quality commercial corridor development with additional buildings and residents. New neighborhood dining and services along select waterfronts will further heighten the Township's appeal to residents and visitors.

Reinvestment in local commercial corridors will be complemented by quality development and public improvements, like streetscaping and public art. Improvements at key intersections will ensure that the Township's gateways provide a positive and welcoming environment. The existing industrial sites along Highland Road, Dixie Highway, and North Telegraph Road will continue to provide employment opportunities while enhancing the community's character.

Waterford Township's natural resources and parks, including Dodge 4 State Park, Hess-Hathaway Park, the Clinton River, Pontiac Lake State Recreation Area, and the inland lakes will continue to underpin the community's identity and quality of life. The road network will provide safe, efficient transportation across the community. Recreational amenities and open spaces that are strategically located along the inland lakes will function as community cornerstones. They will allow residents and visitors to gather, recreate, and enjoy the Township's spectacular lakefront. New multi-use trails along major transportation routes will create a cohesive recreation network that connects the Township's neighborhoods and commercial areas. The Township will also feature a new community center that offers diverse activities and specialized recreational facilities, including pickleball courts, a sports center, dog parks, and children's parks, that will increase the choice of recreational activities for Waterford Township residents.

GOALS

Goals are broad, long-range desired outcomes. The community's actions and decisions should work to support these goals. They are ambitions and will require the culmination of many incremental actions to be fully achieved.

Land Use & Development

Goal 1

Maintain the existing residential, commercial, and industrial land use pattern as it has existed historically, while repositioning strategic areas to broaden the tax base and provide greater housing choice.

- Promote the reuse and redevelopment of underused commercial properties to create vibrant commercial spaces and mixed-use districts.
- Allow for upper-floor residential, multifamily residential, and single-family attached developments on underutilized sites in the corridors.
- Prioritize redevelopment with a mix of commercial and residential uses in strategic nodes including the Drayton Plains subarea along Dixie Highway and the Cooley Lake Road Corridor.
- Support the reinvestment and rehabilitation of housing in established neighborhoods and lakefront areas to improve the neighborhood's character.
- Promote the reuse and redevelopment of industrial properties while encouraging future industrial developments in existing industrial areas.
- Direct growth away from environmental areas, such as forests, wetlands, and riverine areas, and conserve their natural integrity.
- Identify and enhance points of destination

Housing & Neighborhoods

Goal 1

Foster reinvestment and rehabilitation in the Township's established neighborhoods, provide a range of housing options, and support a high quality-of-life for all residents, regardless of age or background.

- Continue to preserve and reinvest in established single-family neighborhoods.
- Encourage infill development of context-sensitive townhomes and duplexes in commercial districts.
- Promote gentle density increases through single-family attached housing, multifamily buildings, and senior housing where residential neighborhoods transition into commercial/office land uses and at strategic locations along major corridors.
- Proactively encourage the rehabilitation of residential properties to promote high-quality housing and to enhance the community's visual appeal.
- Build a unified sense of community and local identity within neighborhoods.
- Preserve and integrate green spaces in existing and new residential areas.
- Guide future residential growth into development patterns that respect the natural environment by clustering housing units within non-sensitive areas of the property.

Economic Development

Goal 1

Maximize the commercial corridors' economic performance through repositioning commercial activities within strategic locations and creating new mixed-use destinations, including a town center along Dixie Highway and the Cooley Lake Road area.

- Establish a town center along Dixie Highway north and Frembes Road featuring a lively, pedestrian-friendly environment and a diverse mix of residential and commercial uses
- Encourage additional mixed commercial and residential development at other strategic locations along key corridors
- Promote outlet developments in underutilized parking lots
- Transition commercial corridors' underutilized sections into a mix of multi-family and single-family attached residential to better create a critical mass of commercial activities in specific nodes
- Support redevelopment by establishing financial incentives to assist with façade improvements, seeking grants to fund redevelopment, and coordinating with developers to redevelop opportunity sites, such as Summit Mall
- Establish gateways to the Township that serve as centers of activity and enhance the community's visual quality, especially along M-59 at the Township's western border and the Summit Mall site.

Goal 2

Leverage existing commercial waterfront regions through supporting business growth and variety of businesses, including dining, entertainment, commercial service establishments and outdoor dining and grow the Township's image as a destination.

- Support a range of businesses, including specialty food and drink, entertainment, and local restaurants on the Township's commercial properties. This includes encouraging the development of restaurants and outdoor dining on lakes that offer commercial opportunities
- Limit the prevalence of storage uses, automotive repair, and other uses that deter the commercial corridors' level of activity and visual appeal
- Enhance commercial properties that offer waterfront view-scape
- Encourage the development of active outdoor dining uses on waterfront commercial properties while ensuring that they complement the surrounding neighborhoods' character.

Transportation & Infrastructure

Goal 1

Provide a safe and efficient, connected system of roads and streets that enhances the community's character and assures proper circulation within and throughout the community.

- Continue to foster partnerships with the Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC) and the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to develop a multi-year Capital Improvement Program for improvement and maintenance of the Township's public roads
- Develop and maintain an annual review process for evaluating the Township road's capital needs.
- Establish a master nonmotorized maintenance plan
- Undertake streetscape improvements, such as boulevard with landscaping and raised medians, in vehicular corridors including Highland Road and Dixie Highway to improve appearances and traffic safety
- Enhance the existing sidewalks and nonmotorized trails and add new sidewalks and nonmotorized trails along major roads and residential streets to improve nonmotorized travel throughout the Township
- Explore ways to connect identified points of destination
- Improve pedestrian safety through traffic calming methods

Goal 2

Provides adequate and cost-efficient water and sewer service to all geographic areas of the community, consistent with the development of the Township.

- Continue the maintenance and updating of water mains and sanitary sewers
- Investigate, develop, and implement the installation of water line loop systems
- Continue to evaluate the water system to ensure that hydrants possess the water capacity and pressure necessary for fighting fires

Goal 3

Provide a sustainable, cost effective and user-friendly storm drainage system to accommodate storm water runoff, prevent property damage due to flooding and improve environmental quality.

- Ensure that all new development and redevelopment projects are evaluated and constructed without overburdening the Township's storm drainage system

Goal 4

Maintain Township facilities and partnerships with service providers, including Waterford Schools, Police and Fire Departments, healthcare providers, and utility providers to supply community services and ensure a high quality of life and the overall desirability of Waterford Township.

- Ensure that all Township buildings provide a safe and effective environment for Township staff to deliver services to Township residents
- Develop an annual Township buildings capital and maintenance needs assessment review process
- Develop, implement, and maintain a preventative maintenance schedule for Township facilities and equipment as part of the Township capital improvement plan
- Promote partnerships between the community and Waterford Township Schools to integrate the community with the school system, and coordinate education opportunities and community involvement.
- Facilitate the addition of new community services including a community and recreation center and technology/trade school.

Parks, Open Space, and Environment

Goal 1

Facilitate water-based recreation through the addition of new lakefront connections and create an inter-connected network of recreational trails for the community.

- Continue to enhance waterfront connections on Loon Lake, Cass Lake, Pontiac Lake, Crescent Lake, and Otter/Sylvan Lake to provide the public with waterfront recreation opportunities
- Construct a network of non-motorized recreational trails to connect neighborhoods, commercial areas, and recreation facilities to enhance bicycle and pedestrian recreation throughout the community
- Maintain the Township's existing park system including Hess-Hathaway Park, Dodge 4 State Park, Elizabeth Woods Park, Pontiac Lake Recreation Area, and Drayton Plains Park continue to support diverse recreational opportunities
- Work with neighboring communities and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to establish a trail connection with the Iron Belle Trail

Goal 2

Maintain and enhance the community's existing park system to provide robust recreation opportunities for residents and visitors and preserve the Township's natural features.

- Preserve the Township's natural features, including wetlands, wooded areas, and riverine areas, through discouraging developments within these areas
- Promote conservation design within future developments to maximize preservation of natural features
- Explore and implement other recreational facilities that provide residents greater diversity of recreational activities
- Preserve the quality of the Clinton River and the Township's inland lakes
- Draft and adopt a five-year parks and recreation plan to detail and coordinate the Township's park improvements.

CHAPTER 4

LAND USE PLAN

All parcels within the Township have been assigned one of 11 land use designations that cover the full range of Waterford Township's land use types. The Land Use Plan should serve as the basis for development review and approval and future zoning amendments, which may be needed to realize the full implementation of the Plan's recommendations. The future land use map, is presented at the end of this section.

GROWTH STRATEGY & PLANNING PRINCIPLES

This section defines the underlying principles that informed the development of the land use framework. As a largely built-out community, Waterford Township is at a pivotal point in time to define its strategy to continue to grow and redevelop. Based on engagement with stakeholders and the community, this plan identifies several overarching principles that inform this plan's land use policies.

Placemaking & Third Places

Placemaking is a collective, creative process to create public spaces that promote people's health, happiness, and well-being. It often involves the reuse of space to create places for people to walk, shop, recreate, and spend time in. Effective placemaking does not necessarily involve large-scale effort or costs - small actions such as the addition of temporary seating to activate an underused outdoor area can present an effective approach.

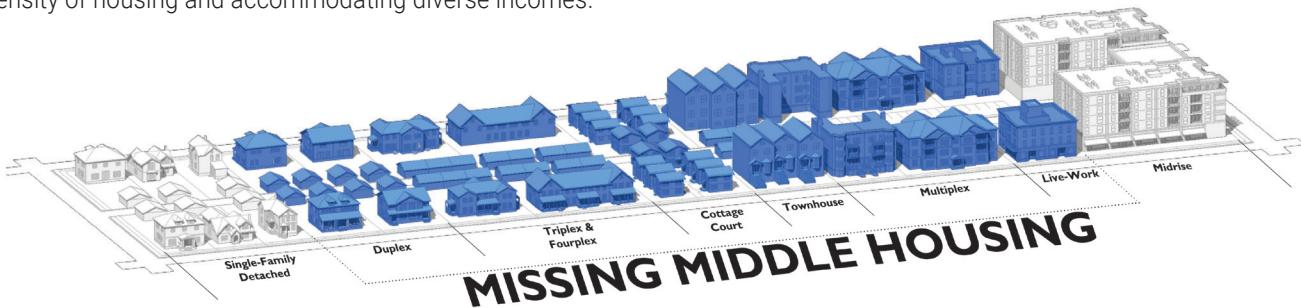
One of the desired outcomes of placemaking is to create "third places." A third place is a location that allows people to come together, spend time in groups, exchange ideas, and build relationships outside of home, often referred to as first place, and work, often referred to as second place. Third places can be both private and public such as parks or plazas that allow people to socialize in groups, coffee shops in which group of friends can connect, or vibrant streets where you can grab a bench and watch the passersby.

The Waterford Township community expressed a desire to promote cohesive places that bring the community together. The placemaking concept is a foundational principle to the Drayton Plains Subarea area along Dixie Highway and the Cooley Lake area, which should include public gathering spaces, outdoor dining, and streetscape features that create a distinctive sense of place. The community also expressed a desire for third places, including a new community center and gathering spaces. Traffic calming and safety features, including the implementation of medians, parkways, and landscaping will be a key component of placemaking in major corridors, as these features will enhance the pedestrian environment and encourage people to walk and spend time in these key areas.



Housing Choice

Housing choice refers to the ability of households to choose housing that suits their needs regardless of age, income, culture, or other factors. Communities accommodate housing choice by intentionally increasing the range of available options to include "Missing Middle" formats such as duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, and townhomes, which often increase the density and range of prices offered than single-family detached housing, thereby furthering housing choice, but without visual or traffic impacts often associated with large apartment buildings. Allowing these missing middle formats often supports housing choice by increasing the density of housing and accommodating diverse incomes.



The Waterford Township community expressed a need to support housing choice through the provision of affordable, safe, clean housing. The Township supports housing choice through the provision of mixed-use development in the Drayton Plans area along Dixie Highway, the Cooley Lake area, the Union Lake Business District, and Urban Business District in which housing should be provided in upper floors of structures with ground-floor commercial uses. Housing choice is also supported through the development of mixed housing formats such as duplexes, townhomes, rowhomes, duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes near the commercial corridors.

Conservation Development Design

Conservation design is an approach to develop land for housing, commercial, and employment uses, while preserving key natural features such as forests, wetlands, waterbodies, and open space. As an example, a municipality would allow portions of a tract of land that do not contain trees or vegetation to be developed for housing at a higher density than would normally be allowed, while other portions of the property that contain trees, vegetation, and wetlands would be preserved. The concept is to allow for the development of land in a manner that preserves natural resources.

Though much of the Township is developed, the community contains pristine natural areas including woodlands along the Clinton River and tracts of wooded land in southwest and western portions of the Township. The Waterford Township community emphasized community's natural features as key strengths. The Township should ensure that its key natural features are conserved as properties are developed.



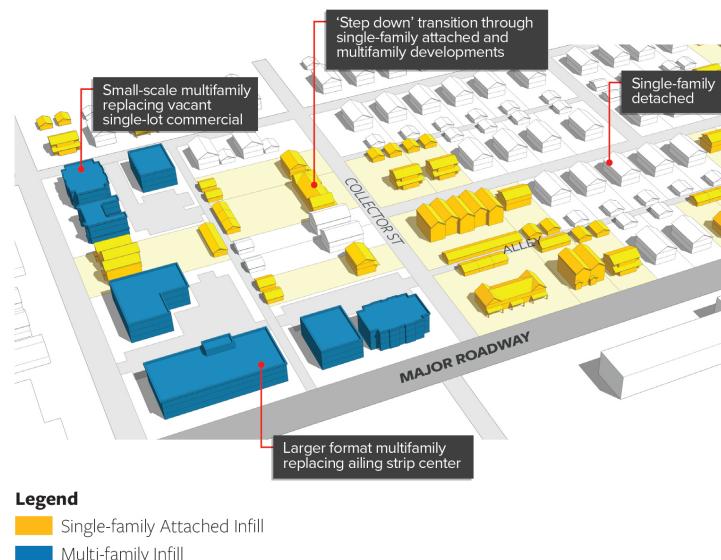
Repositioning Corridors

In the wake of a shifting retail sector and shrinking demand for brick-and-mortar storefronts, communities throughout the United States are looking for strategies to reimagine their commercial corridors. This is of particular concern in built-out communities like Waterford where accommodating a modern commercial development requires the renovation or redevelopment of existing retail areas. Waterford Township features several corridors with vacant or underperforming commercial properties, including Highland Road and Dixie Highway, that the community wants redeveloped to provide a greater range of uses.

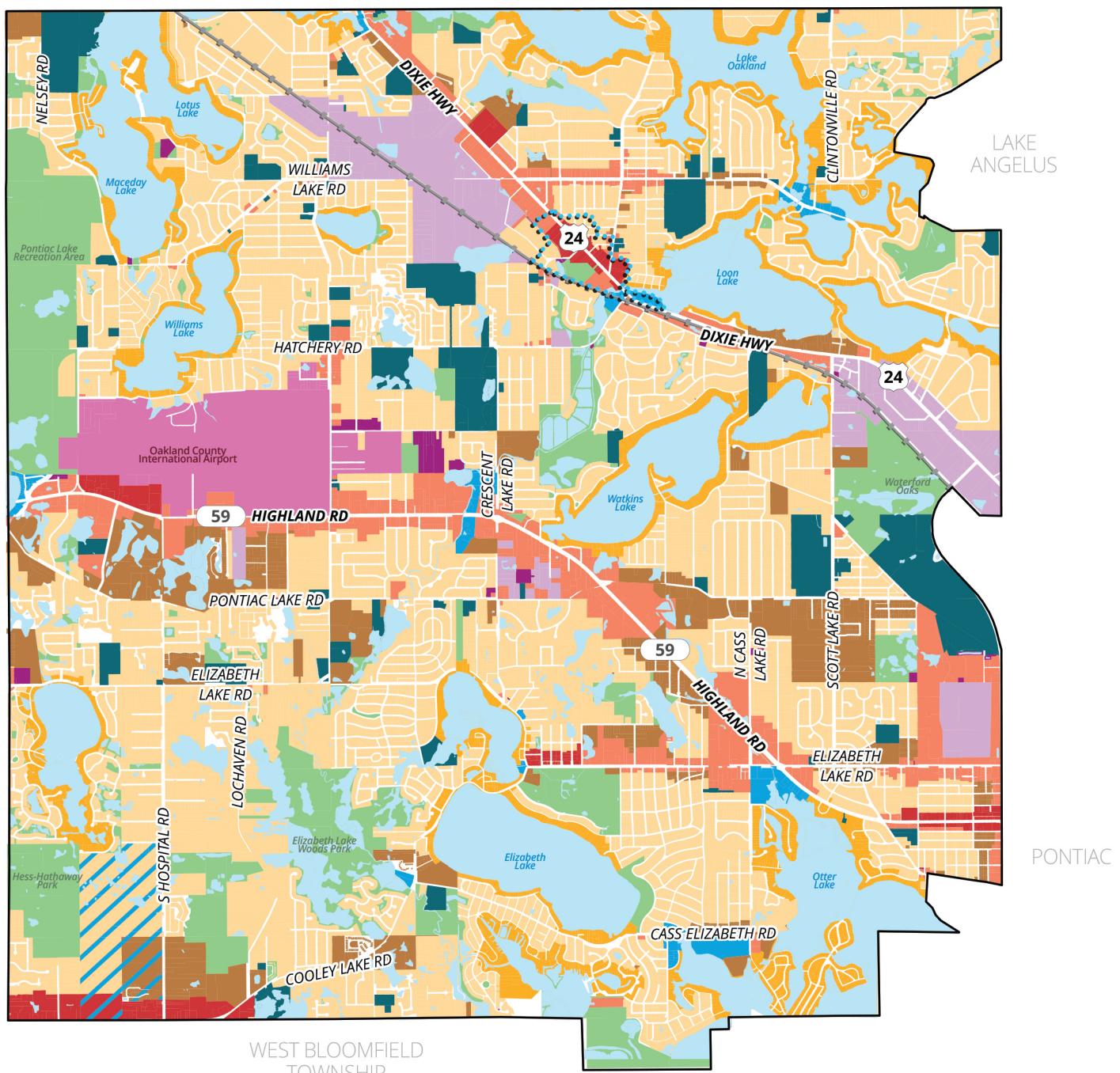
Corridors must be repositioned to transform outdated strip commercial development and large parking lots into vibrant, attractive commercial districts with placemaking components. To enhance redevelopment in corridors, consideration should be given to targeting underperforming lots for new multifamily housing developments that will allow for a flexible range of uses in corridors and bolster support for retail with additional residential sites.

Outlots should immediately be targeted for infill development to provide a buffer between busy corridors and interior streets and increase the density of commercial options at a site. Development in these key corridors should also set aside open space and/or pocket parks. These features will provide greenspace to new residents and help contain runoff from the newly densified developments.

To encourage visitors to walk from one business to another, traffic calming infrastructure will need to be installed to sufficiently slow vehicles and provide the level of comfort necessary for pedestrians to shop. These calming methods could make use of cross access easements between neighboring commercial developments to improve connectivity across multiple sites for both pedestrians and motorists. In addition, streetscaping features including medians with vegetation, widened parkways, and bicycle lanes should be added along major corridors to enhance the pedestrian realm and calm traffic.



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FUTURE LAND USE

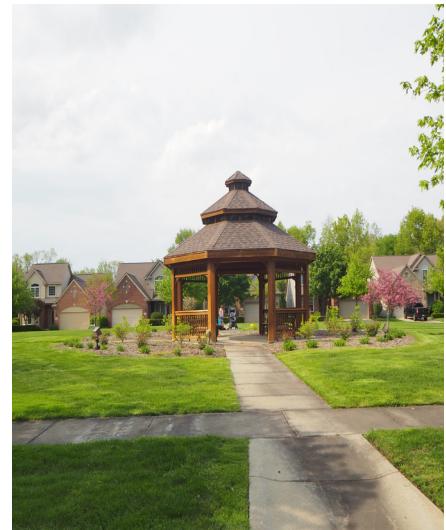
- Single-Family Neighborhood
- Lakefront Residential
- Mixed Residential
- Mixed-Use
- Corridor Commercial
- Waterfront Commercial
- Industrial
- Parks/Open Space
- Public/Semi-Public
- Transportation/Utilities
- Drayton Plains Subarea
- Planned Unit Development
- Railroads
- Oakland County Int'l Airport

LAND USE PLAN

All parcels within the Township have been assigned to one of the following 11 land use designations.

Single-Family Neighborhoods

Single-family neighborhoods include the Township's historic residential areas that consist primarily of single-family detached housing units on lots that are typically larger and wider than in the Lakefront Residential areas. Single-family neighborhoods are the Township's most prevalent type of land use. A variety of single-family detached residential formats exist ranging from single-story residences on long, rectangular blocks to newer two-floor construction located along curvilinear streets. Efforts to encourage cluster development where possible, enhance the aesthetic quality of neighborhoods, and ensure the visual quality of properties should be a focus.



Mixed Residential

Mixed Residential consists of multiple housing types including townhomes, duplexes, and multifamily buildings. These areas encourage greater variety within Waterford Township's housing stock and allow for greater flexibility to build denser residential development in proximity to the Township's major roadways, including Highland Road and Dixie Highway. Mixed Residential areas also provide a transition between Waterford's major corridors and its single-family neighborhoods. Multifamily and single-family attached housing should be sited and designed to create a cohesive neighborhood setting that allows for walking and biking and promotes an overall sense of place and identity.



Lakefront Residential

Lakefront Residential areas encompass neighborhoods with frontage on or immediately adjoining the Township's inland lakes including Elizabeth Lake and Williams Lake. Residential properties with this designation are typically fully built-out and are narrower in width than the residential areas elsewhere in the community. Many structures date from the mid- 20th century, however, many have been rebuilt in recent years. The consolidation of lakefront residential properties should be allowed; however, diverse housing patterns should continue in the future to retain property owners' access to the lakefront. The rehabilitation or reconstruction of the cottages and lakefront houses should also continue to occur, and the focus should be on maintaining neighborhoods' visual quality and the aesthetics of properties.



Waterfront Commercial

Waterfront Commercial areas include dining and retail businesses that provide unique experiences for residents and visitors on inland lakes such as Pontiac Lake, Loon Lake, Crescent Lake and other waterbodies such as the Clinton River. Small-scale restaurants and retail establishments should predominate, and accessory outdoor dining and retail areas should be encouraged to provide an appealing setting and experience. Such commercial developments should be required to construct and maintain site amenities that integrate with the waterfront. Consideration should be given to site design, buffering, and screening to ensure that these establishments are compatible with the surrounding Lakefront Residential areas.



Corridor Commercial

Corridor Commercial uses include a mix of retail, commercial service, dining, and professional office uses along the Township's major vehicular corridors, such as Highland Road, Dixie Highway, and W Walton Boulevard. These areas encompass a mix of scales including large retailers that attract patronage from outside the Township, and small businesses that serve the needs of nearby residents. Given this land use's large parking footprint orderly vehicle management should be encouraged through efficient vehicle access and cross access easements. Underutilized parking facilities and other underutilized land should be considered for development into new commercial structures and uses. A flexible range of formats are encouraged including plazas and visually appealing strip development, although special attention to site aesthetics, landscaping, building design, and signage should be paid to ensure visually appealing development that enhances the community's aesthetic quality.



Mixed-use

Mixed-use areas form centers of activity that create inviting places for residents and visitors to spend time in the Drayton Plains area along Dixie Highway and along Cooley Lake Road, M-59, and Telegraph Road. Building forms should vary between single and multiple floors, although the structures should front directly on or near right of ways and off-street parking should be located to structures' side or rear to create a pedestrian-oriented environment. Commercial dining, retail, and entertainment uses should locate on buildings' first floors to generate pedestrian activity, while commercial service and residential uses should be allowed on upper floors to create a critical mass of visitors, create foot traffic, and encourage redevelopment.



Drayton Plains Subarea

The Drayton Plains is a unique subarea that functions as a place for residents and visitors to gather and spend time. Redevelopment of the existing commercial structures with a mix of single and multiple floor developments featuring a mix of commercial and residential uses should be encouraged, although the existing narrow lots and configuration of buildings with shared walls should be retained to promote a downtown setting. Outdoor dining and the sale of merchandise should be promoted in the structures' rear to provide an appealing location away from the traffic on Dixie Highway. Public gathering spaces are integral to attracting visitors to a destination, as their seating and landscaping amenities provide a nice spot for visitors to sit and spend time. These users are more likely to stay in the area for longer and spend more time looking into nearby shops or enjoying curated activities. The Township should pursue the establishment of a public plaza along Signet Drive and retaining exiting open space such as Shell Park to provide open space in the Drayton Plains Subarea.

Industrial

Industrial areas include employment-related uses including heavy and light industrial establishments, manufacturing, warehousing, and the distribution of goods and materials. These uses should continue in the locations that they are historically located including along Williams Lake Road, west of Dixie Highway; south of Highland Road, east of Crescent Lake Road; and along Dixie Highway, west of Telegraph Road. Business expansion and redevelopment should be accommodated on developed sites with existing industrial uses but new land and properties should not be developed with industrial uses.



Parks, Open Space, and Protected Conservation Areas

Parks and Open Space areas include recreational facilities and protected conservation areas such as Hess-Hathaway Park, Elizabeth Lake Woods Park, Pontiac Country Club, and Silver Lake Golf Course, which comprise key community assets. These recreational assets should continue in their current form to allow residents and visitors to recreate and enjoy the Township's natural setting. New nonmotorized connections to these spaces should be provided where possible to connect them with nearby neighborhoods and amenities. This designation also includes key environmental features such as wetlands and wooded areas, which should remain completely undeveloped.



Public/Semi-Public

The Public/Semi-Public designation includes local government uses, municipal facilities, community service providers, schools, and places of worship and assembly. Waterford Civic Center, Waterford Township Public Library, Waterford Township Recreation Center, Waterford Kettering and Mott High Schools, and the Oakland County facilities along Watkins Lake Road are included within this designation. These uses should continue to be located throughout the community, however, concerns such as access, buffering, screening, and aesthetics should be addressed on an individual basis depending on context. Nonmotorized connections should be added to connect to these sites with nearby neighborhoods.



Airport

The Airport includes ground facilities such as aircraft hangars, runways, and airport parking for Oakland County International Airport. The airport should continue in its current location along Highland Road in the Township's east, and renovations, site changes, and small-scale expansions should be allowed over time. The airport provides the opportunity for numerous secondary businesses including catering, chauffeuring, and concierge services, which thrive on visitors arriving and departing the airport. The facility can also accommodate events, entertainment, conventions, and other temporary activity-related uses and the Township should partner with the County airport and communicate regularly to encourage these innovative, temporary uses of the Oakland County airport site. This could include recreational spaces that provide safe spaces for children and photographers to watch planes take off and land or airport bars and restaurants that give guests the chance to dine while watching airport activity.



Transportation/Utility

Transportation/Utility uses support local infrastructure and provide rights-of-way or easements for the transmission of gas, electric, water, sewer, and other infrastructure essential to the community. This includes both facilities and infrastructure as well as related rights-of-way.



Planned Unit Development

The planned unit development designation indicates areas in which new development will need to be approved through the Township's planned unit development. These areas include large sites that could have a broader range of potential uses. The Planned Unit Development process will be used to evaluate innovative plans and proposals that require particular consideration and will allow for more extensive public input than other zoning procedures.

CHAPTER 5

RESIDENTIAL AREAS PLAN

Waterford Township includes a variety of existing neighborhoods largely developed with single-family detached housing. Growth within these existing neighborhoods and in previously undeveloped areas should ensure the community remains an attractive location for current and future residents.

The Residential Areas Plan identifies locations where development patterns should occur, including the wholesale redevelopment of properties, small-scale revitalization of neighborhoods, new growth on previously undeveloped tracts, and maintenance of the existing neighborhood quality. The Residential Areas Plan Map identifies specific tracts of land where these different types of residential growth should occur to accommodate the community's housing goals established in Chapter 4.

RESIDENTIAL FRAMEWORK PRINCIPLES

The Residential Framework Plan recommends different types of development in different areas of the Township, however, several principles underpin these policies.

Promote Neighborhood Revitalization

Waterford Township's residential neighborhoods comprise most of the community's land area. Much of the housing stock was built between the 1950s and 1970s. Older houses are often more prone to maintenance issues and the housing stock in the Township's oldest neighborhoods tend to be smaller in size and feature fewer amenities than what homebuyers often seek in 2023. The Township should support reinvestment in its neighborhoods to improve the housing stock quality and community character.

Home and Façade Improvement Funds

The Township should educate residents on available grants, loans, and rebate programs from local, state, and federal agencies that could provide financial aid in home repairs. The Michigan State Housing Development Authority provides a property improvement program, which assists homeowners in making repairs and improvements that improve the livability of the structure. Meanwhile, the Michigan Community Action Agency provides a repair program that helps homeowners finance furnace, roof, plumbing, and electrical repairs. The Township should promote neighborhood revitalization by providing access to information on these resources.

Municipal Programs To Support Residential Rehabilitation

Many communities provide financial resources to help residents with home rehabilitation. The Village of Schaumburg, Illinois has a residential rehabilitation program that provides no-interest loans to assist residents in correcting code violations, substandard living conditions, and other basic structural deficiencies. Similarly, the Village's Handyworker program provides funds for contractors to make basic repairs to residences of low-income seniors and individuals with disabilities. Funds for these programs are provided through the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grants. The Township should explore similar funding sources for housing rehabilitation programs.

Enforce the Building Code

Waterford Township's building regulations are in Chapter 4 of the Code of Ordinances. The Township currently employs one building official (supported by 3 inspectors). In addition to providing incentives for property maintenance, Waterford Township can proactively enforce the building code to improve neighborhood conditions. This includes ensuring proper removal of discarded furniture, inoperable vehicles, renovation of facades, and maintenance of lawns. Code enforcement is typically implemented through property inspection and code citations conducted by staff.

Watercraft and Recreational Vehicle Regulations

The placement of recreational vehicles and watercraft on private property creates visual clutter that detract from neighborhood character. The Township has Zoning standards regarding the storage of recreational vehicles and watercraft that limits the number of watercraft on a single lot, driveway, or front yard and their location near the principal building. Some Michigan communities have stronger standards, such as requiring recreational vehicles be located in rear or side yards entirely rather than front yards or limit the length of time they can be stored. The Township should consider whether adjustments in its standards could be made to promote the visual quality of its neighborhoods.

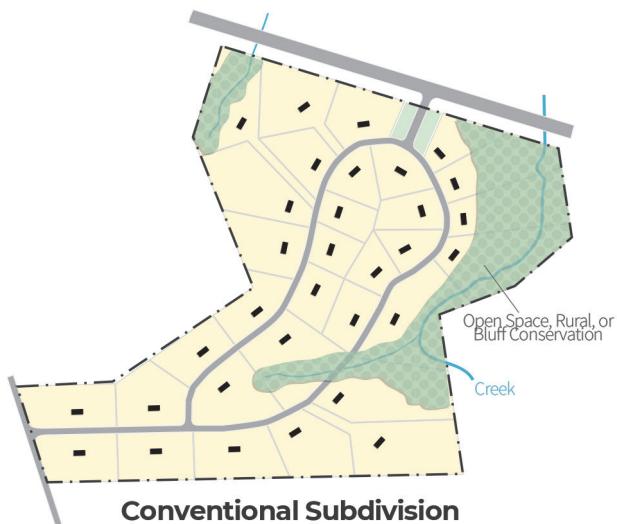
Conservation Design

Wetlands and mature trees are dispersed throughout the Township, particularly in its southwestern extent. As development occurs on land partially impacted by wetlands, these areas should be preserved through conservation design. This can include cluster development, buffering, and other techniques that sustain natural elements to support the community's natural integrity and stormwater management.

Some communities choose to enact cluster development standards in their zoning ordinance which typically allow for standards in the base zoning, such as lot area, lot width, and setbacks to be reduced when natural features such as wetlands, mature tree stands, or land near riparian areas are placed in a conservation easement. The Township could consider establishing such provisions in its subdivision ordinance to ensure that its natural features are preserved and properties in the west are developed.

CASE STUDY: POKÉGON ÉDAWAT HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

In 2004-2005, the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians first began to develop townhomes and duplexes in a cluster development style in Dowagiac, Michigan. The housing units are clustered on small, narrow lots along looping roads that follow the site's topography to preserve its natural integrity, open space, and reduce the cost of roads and utilities. The development also maximizes stormwater infiltration through the use of pervious pavement, rain gardens, and bioswales. The footprints of homes are also minimized through the reduction of hallway space and elimination of foyers, further aiding stormwater



Conventional Subdivision



Conservation Design Subdivision

Housing Choice

The limited variety of housing options in Waterford Township is a pressing issue. The lack of variety contributes to greater housing cost relative to a households' income and limits the community's appeal to elderly residents and younger households. The Township should take measures to facilitate greater housing choice while retaining the quiet character of the community's neighborhoods that residents value. This can be achieved through "gentle density" increases such as a duplexes within existing single-family areas and through the conversion of previously nonresidential sites in corridors to residential uses.

Facilitate Corridor Redevelopment

Given the Township's largely built-out character, land must be redeveloped to increase housing supply. The Township's Dixie Highway, W Walton Boulevard, Elizabeth Lake Road, Pontiac Lake Road, Highland Road, Telegraph Road, and Cooley Lake Road corridors contain underused sites occupied with surface parking and underused commercial plazas. Areas in these corridors should be redeveloped with multifamily and single-family attached uses to increase the range of housing options as designated in the land use plan. The consolidation of lots should be promoted where it would facilitate the conversion to multifamily development. New multifamily uses should be made to fit the corridor context; buildings should be set back from high-traffic roadways where necessary to ensure the comfort of residents, while buffering and screening should be provided to adjoining single-family neighborhoods.

Mixed-Housing Product on Larger Sites

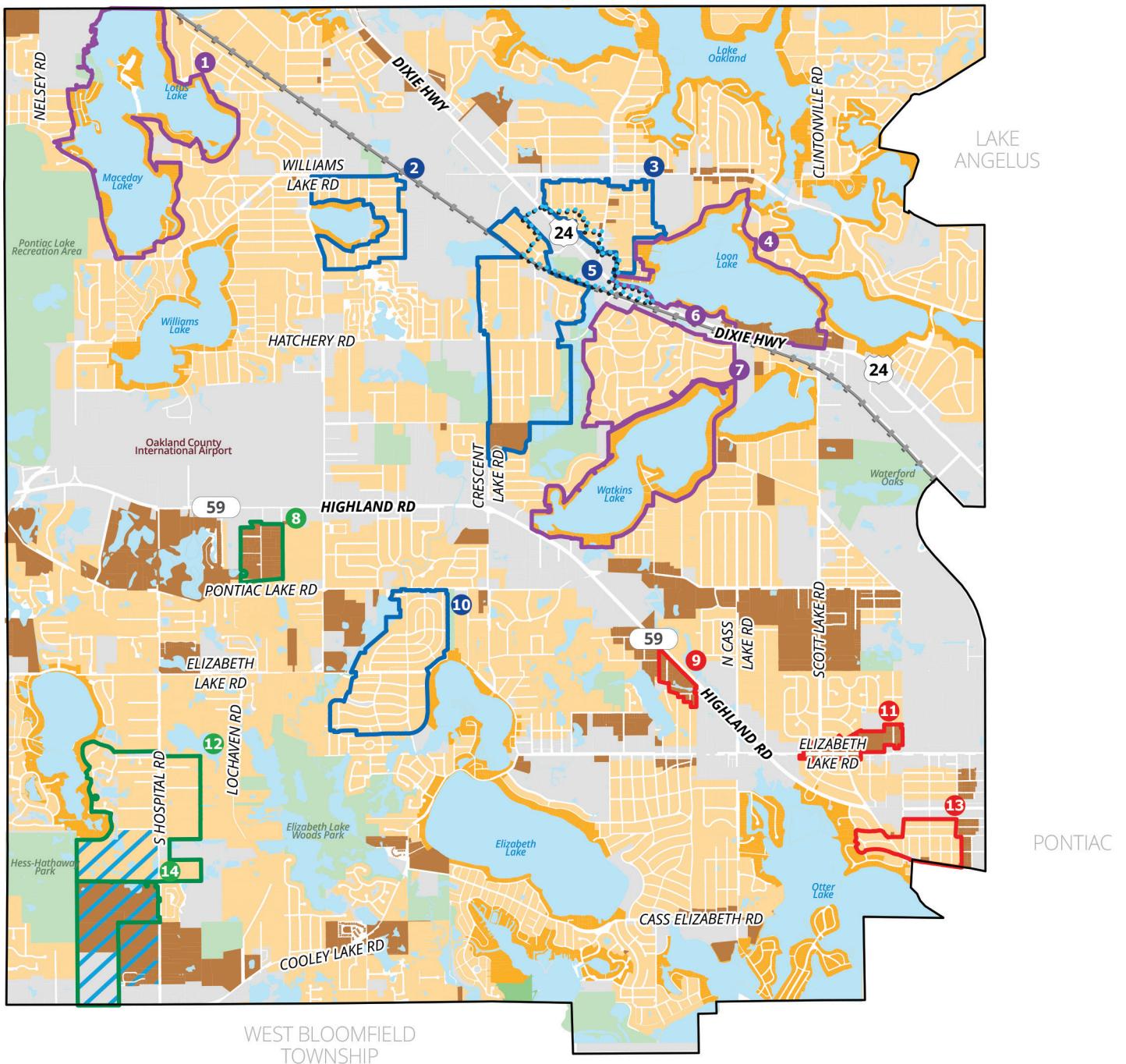
With limited vacant land available, the Township's larger sites present opportunities to add housing in a mix of formats. For instance, the former Art Van Furniture property along Dixie Highway is designated for redevelopment with a mix of commercial and residential uses. A mix of housing formats should be allowed on these sites as they redevelop over time. The Township should enable a mix of residential formats on larger corridor sites in a way that serves developers and market conditions.

CASE STUDY: HOM FLATS

In 2020, the City of Wyoming, Michigan approved the HOM Flats development along West 28th Street which involved the redevelopment of the former Studio 28 multiplex cinema site and the conversion of its surface parking areas for multifamily buildings. It includes a 226-unit apartment complex along the Southwest 28th Street corridor at 28 West Place. Many of the housing units are below market-rate rental prices to increase the range of housing options for low- to moderate-income residents. The Township should consider promoting similar types of multifamily residential development in longtime commercial sites.



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RESIDENTIAL FRAMEWORK PLAN

Framework Plan Designation

- Neighborhood Maintenance
- Neighborhood Revitalization
- New Growth Area
- Redevelopment

Future Land Use Designation

- Single-Family Neighborhood
- Lakefront Residential
- Mixed Residential
- Drayton Plains Subarea
- Planned Unit Development
- Railroads

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles



RESIDENTIAL FRAMEWORK

The Residential Areas Plan builds on the future land use plan to describe detailed policies for the areas of the community designated for residential development. All residential areas in Waterford fall into one of the following four categories, which explain the type of change that should occur in them.

Neighborhood Maintenance. These areas encompass the Township's exiting neighborhoods in which the rehabilitation or reconstruction of existing housing has occurred in recent years. These areas require little to no intervention, though the rehabilitation of housing should continue over time as market forces drive reinvestment.

Neighborhood Revitalization. These areas are existing developed neighborhoods with deteriorating housing due to age and/or lack of reinvestment and maintenance. These areas should be targeted for code enforcement, homeowner assistance programs, and modifications to zoning to facilitate reinvestment.

Redevelopment. These areas include sites with commercial uses that could be partially or fully redeveloped into residential uses.

New Growth Area. These areas include undeveloped land that could be utilized for future housing. Sites within this category do not have wetlands or other sensitive habitats, but efforts should be made to preserve natural features.

Residential Improvement Areas

The following numbered paragraphs describe the desired characteristics and physical attributes of Waterford Township's neighborhood areas as identified on the Residential Framework Map. Each numbered paragraph uses the future land use plan to provide policy direction regarding the appropriate uses, format of development, and placement of buildings and parking for the Township's neighborhoods. Each area is outlined in a color representing one of the residential improvement area categories described above. Investment in these areas should be prioritized based on the category.

- 1. This area includes residential properties with frontage on Maceday Lake and Lotus Lake. Homes in this area are in good condition and many lakefront cottages have been renovated in recent years.** The Township should encourage and allow continued reinvestment and rehabilitation of lakefront homes and the lakefront character of the area, with large homes facing the lakefront being retained.
- 2. This area includes the neighborhoods surrounding Huntoon Lake.** The Township should encourage reinvestment in the housing stock and the replacement or rehabilitation of small, obsolete residential buildings. The Township should consider placing sidewalks to improve connections to Waterford Kettering High School and the planned recreational trail along Williams Lake Road should be added to enhance the area's appeal.
- 3. This area's proximity to Dixie Highway area presents a unique opportunity to create a critical mass of residents near the Drayton Plains Subarea through the addition of new housing.** Duplexes should be allowed as infill development to support this goal. The Township should ensure setback and other dimensional standards encourage desired infill development by providing sufficient buildable area. Sidewalks should be added where they are not present to promote pedestrian access between the neighborhood and the Drayton Plains Subarea.
- 4. This area encompasses residential properties along Loon Lake and Silver Lake that are in good condition.** Many of the area's cottages were renovated or replaced with newer homes. Though the existing pattern of single-family homes, with relatively narrow lakefront access lots, should remain, the recent pattern of reinvestment should continue over time; the Township should encourage property owners to reinvest in, add to, and rehabilitate homes.
- 5. This neighborhood is located immediately south of the planned Drayton Plains Subarea and presents an opportunity to add new housing and a greater number of residents near the future businesses along Dixie Highway.** The Township should ensure that its setback and dimensional standards allow for the construction of new single-family housing and duplexes. Sidewalks are missing in many areas including Warren Drive, Pauline Drive, Georgeland Drive, Crane Street, Bridge Street, and Frembes Road. The Township should consider adding these amenities to increase the neighborhood's access to the Drayton Plains Subarea and Waterford Kettering High School, thereby increasing the area's appeal to residents.
- 6. The area is in proximity to Cooley Elementary School, the Drayton Plains Nature Center, and the planned Drayton Plains Subarea.** The Township should ensure that its zoning regulations allow properties to be redeveloped with new single-family detached and duplex housing. Sidewalks are missing along certain streets including Highfield Road and Denby Drive. If completed, the neighborhood could have quality connections to the amenities around it. The Township should also consider installing sidewalks to connect to proposed trails along Lakewood Drive and the Clinton River.

- 7. This area includes properties with frontage on Watkins Lake along Watkins Lake Road and Lakewood Drive, many of which are in good condition.** Some reinvestment including remodeling and reconstruction, has occurred in recent years, resulting in larger lakefront homes. Market factors should continue to drive the renovation and reconstruction of lakefront cottages over time and the Township should ensure that its setback requirements and bulk and dimensional standards encourage reinvestment.
- 8. This undeveloped greenfield site along Airway Drive south of M-59 poses an opportunity to develop multifamily housing.** The Township should explore the possibility of hotel and lodging uses on the site, given its proximity to the airport. The new multifamily uses should be buffered with vegetation from the single-family neighborhoods to the south and from the commercial sites to the north and west to preserve the neighborhood's visual integrity.
- 9. This area includes several underused commercial sites along M-59 south of Sharon Street, including medical offices, retail, and automotive-related uses.** These properties should be repurposed to add residential uses over time. The conversion of existing structures to accommodate residential uses on upper-floors should be encouraged. Standalone multifamily buildings should also be added on the sites adjoining residential neighborhoods to the south to provide a transition between the corridor and the neighborhood.
- 10. This area includes the neighborhoods immediately west of Crescent Lake where much of the housing will not appeal to potential homebuyers and needs repair.** The Township's zoning standards should encourage reinvestment in properties by allowing flexible setback and dimensional standards. Proactive enforcement of building code provisions and adjustments to fencing regulations should be considered to improve appearances. The area lacks sidewalks and the Township should consider adding them to connect the neighborhood with Knudsen Elementary School, and nonmotorized trails along Crescent Road and the Clinton River.
- 11. This area in the Township's east presents an opportunity for redevelopment with infill housing.** Many of the single-family detached structures on the deep, narrow lots along Marion Avenue are outdated and not market competitive. The development of duplexes should be promoted on these existing single-family lots. The Township should allow the replacement of single-family structures with multifamily uses over time to expand housing options and create a transition between the traffic on Elizabeth Lake Road and the neighborhoods to its north and south.
- 12. This area is located southeast of Pleasant Lake.** Some of the land is occupied with existing single-family detached residential uses, while other portions are occupied with wetlands. Some opportunity for new growth exists in the site's undeveloped areas. Conservation design principles should be adhered to as new development occurs; the Township should approve denser development, potentially through the use of cluster zoning, when natural resources such as mature trees and wetlands are present.
- 13. This area is located northeast of Otter Lake.** Many properties are in need of repair and little reinvestment has occurred in recent years. The Township should encourage property owners to reinvest in their property through zoning adjustments, code enforcement measures, and access to financial resources. Connections to future nonmotorized trails along Voorhies Road should be formed through the placement of sidewalks and pedestrian paths to ensure that the neighborhood has access to the Clinton River Trail.
- 14. In early 2023, Oakland Community College announced it will close their Highland Lakes campus in three years, with plans to sell the 155-acre property in the future.** With its large open area and numerous campus buildings, an opportunity exists to reuse the site. The Township will need to partner with community members to develop detailed planning concepts for this redevelopment opportunity. Such a process should engage residents, developers, local officials, and other stakeholders to determine the desired layout, uses, and development patterns on the site. Future redevelopment plans should also integrate green spaces and access easements connecting Hess Hathaway Park to Cooley Lake Road and Hospital Road to form new connections to the Township's recreational amenities.

CHAPTER 6

COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL AREAS PLAN

Waterford Township includes a variety of commercial corridors and districts primarily centered along the community's major thoroughfares such as Dixie Highway, Highland Road, Williams Lake Road, and Telegraph Road. Though these areas have largely been developed with commercial plazas, they vary in current utilization and physical characteristics such as lot area and depth.

The Township also includes several areas that have historically been developed with industrial and manufacturing uses such as automotive parts manufacturing and warehousing establishments, as opposed to traditional retail storefronts. These areas are set behind the Township's corridor commercial sites but have access to Dixie Highway, Williams Lake Road and other major transportation routes. The Commercial and Industrial Areas Plan recognizes the unique differences between these areas and provides strategies and recommendations for commercial and industrial development over time.

COMMERCIAL FRAMEWORK PRINCIPLES

Several principles informed the development of the recommendations made in the Commercial Areas Plan. This section highlights the top considerations made in the Plan's formulation.

Mixed-Use Redevelopment

The conversion of sites along major corridors like Dixie Highway, Cooley Lake Road east of Williams Lake Road, and M-59 to Telegraph Road to accommodate a wider variety of business and residential patterns is fundamental to the commercial areas plan. The mix of uses should form appealing, cohesive spaces for residents and visitors to gather and incentivize the redevelopment of underused sites by diversifying the range of potential uses.

The configuration of businesses and housing should depend on the location and market dynamics, but multi-story buildings with ground-floor retail, dining, service, and entertainment uses, and upper floor office and residential uses should be the typical pattern. Outdoor gathering spaces such as pocket parks and accessory dining should be added where feasible to enhance the area's appeal.

Lakefront Reuse

Owing to its name, Waterford Township has ample frontage along Otter Lake, Sylvan Lake, Pontiac Lake, Loon Lake, and other inland waterbodies. As a fundamental strategy to achieve the Township's placemaking goal, the commercial areas plan shows that key sites should be converted to food and drink, entertainment, and retail, and other experiential business that allow visitors to access and enjoy these rich natural amenities. As these Lakefront sites are developed, buildings, outdoor dining, and other site features should be located to best provide access to the lakefront. Accessory outdoor dining and patio areas should be encouraged on sites with access to Pontiac Lake, Schoolhouse Lake, Loon Lake, and others to provide a unique experience and best take advantage of their location.

CASE STUDY: ONE WATER STREET, BOYNE CITY, MI

Boyne City, MI made efforts to proactively plan for its waterfront; its 2006 Waterfront Master Plan proposed the redevelopment of sites adjacent to existing waterfront parks and strengthen the tie between downtown and the waterfront. In 2010, the City approved the One Water Street development, which features, office, retail, residential, and restaurant space, including outdoor dining on a formerly underused site. The development affords residents and visitors views of the Lake Charlevoix Waterfront from the retail and café spaces located on-site.

The Boyne City Main Street program has been a part of Michigan Main Street at MEDC since 2003. The program has completed 37 façade rehabilitations for a total investment of nearly \$28 million and brought in 85 net new businesses to the downtown. The City has also used Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds and a local building redevelopment incentive program to reimburse for various projects including façade renovations, fire suppression, barrier free access, and brownfield remediation.



High-Quality Amenities & Design

As redevelopment occurs, the Township should encourage high-quality site design and amenities. Though requirements for building design, landscaping, and nonmotorized access features can add to the cost of development, these requirements present a strategy to reposition the Township's commercial corridors for economic development and facilitate a high-quality sense of place. The addition of vegetated areas within and along the perimeter of parking lots should also be explored to enhance the Township's sense of place by creating a sense of continuity with the natural environment. The Township should also consider encouraging commercial developments featuring high-quality building materials or ground-floor storefronts to ensure that new development enhances the community's visual appearance. This goal could be achieved through zoning incentives and area or height bonuses that would provide economic benefits to developers that achieve the Township's desired visual aesthetic.

Multimodal Access and Management

The Township should encourage site access for both motorists and nonmotorists as sites are developed. For example, requiring properties along planned nonmotorized trails to feature pedestrian and bicycle amenities that connect buildings with the adjoining street frontage. Driveways that allow vehicles access to sites are necessary to ensure access for motorists but regulations regarding their placement, width, and number should be considered. Cross access agreements should be encouraged, whenever feasible, to reduce the number of driveway entrances along a corridor. The Township should also work with the Oakland County Road Commission and the Michigan Department of Transportation to improve sidewalks and implement nonmotorized trails along Dixie Highway, M-59, and other major roads.

Redevelopment Flexibility

The commercial areas plan recommends redevelopment on Dixie Highway, M-59, Cooley Lake Road, W Walton Road, Elizabeth Lake Road, and Telegraph Road corridors. As a key strategy, the Township should ensure that its zoning ordinance standards are flexible enough to encourage this redevelopment. A patchwork of commercial districts currently regulates the Township's corridors. Because each district has its own use, lot area, width, and setback standards, this patchwork of designations complicates the process to consolidate, plan for, and redevelop contiguous lots. The Township should seek to streamline its commercial zoning to create more consistent, flexible standards.

Financing Tools For Redevelopment

Achieving the redevelopment and revitalization envisioned in the commercial and industrial areas plan may require financing measures implemented by the Township. The Township should consider the following fiscal tools to encourage redevelopment in commercial properties.

Downtown Development Authority

Downtown Development Authorities (DDA) are local organizations that exist in many Michigan communities that support redevelopment in commercial districts. Aside from providing business development through networking and information sharing, DDAs are enabled by state statute to create a tax increment financing (TIF) district to support development. TIF allows the organization to collect future increases in property tax revenue within its district to finance a range of projects in the present that could catalyze development, including streetscape renovations, façade improvements, and redevelopment of private property. In 2023, the Township does not have an established DDA, however it should consider forming one in locations planned for redevelopment including the Drayton Plains Subarea area along Dixie Highway.

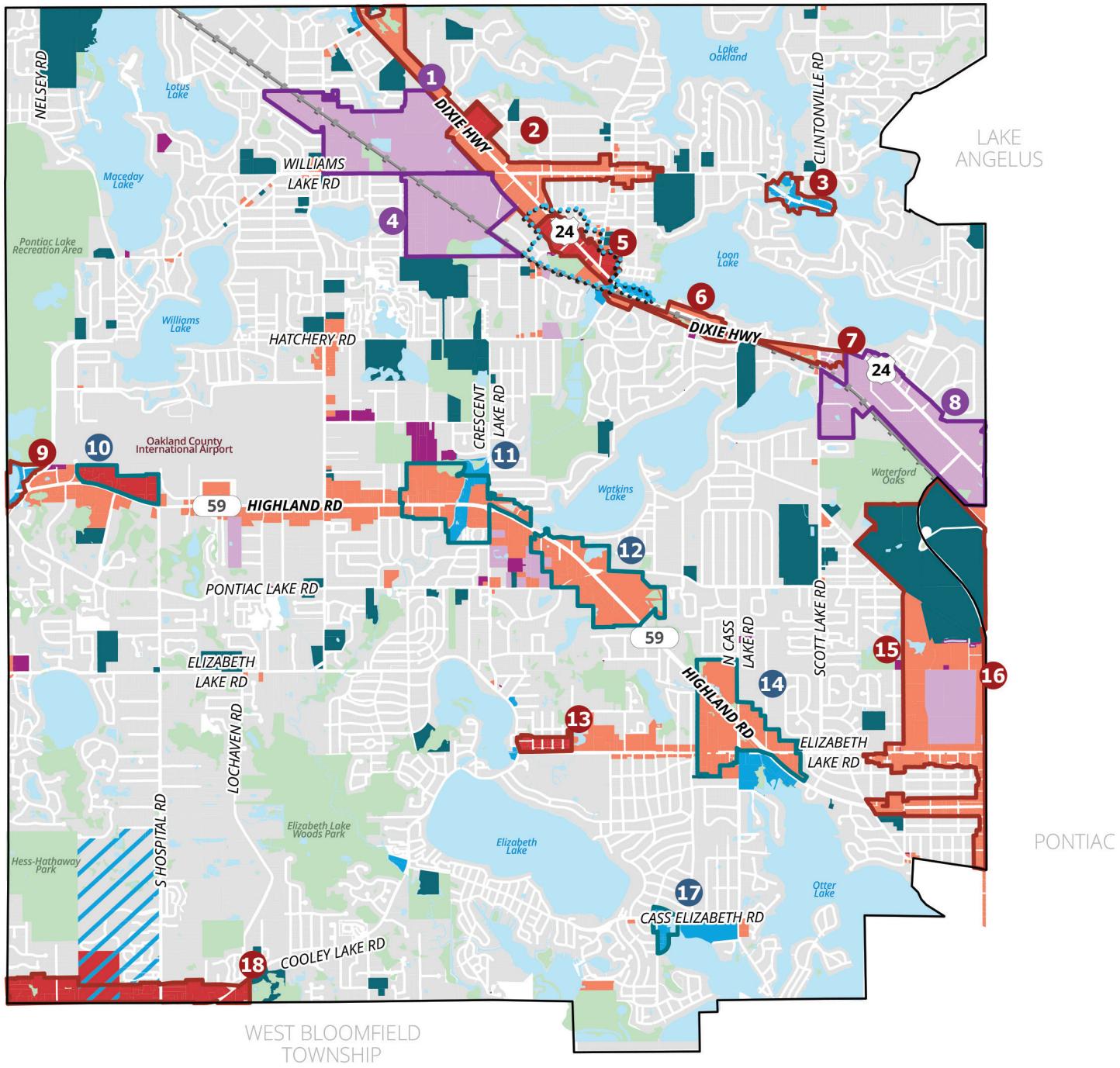
Millages, Municipal Bonds, and SADs

Raising millages and selling municipal bonds is a common strategy for communities to support capital projects. The Township should consider such measures to support the commercial and industrial areas plan implementation. These often require voter approval to implement. Similarly, Special Assessment Districts (SADs) are designated where most property owners agree to allow a governmental agency to levy a special property tax in exchange for a service or specific type of improvement. The Road Commission for Oakland County's SAD paving program allows property owners along residential county roads to pave or repave their streets.

Grants For Redevelopment

The Township should proactively seek grants to support the implementation of the commercial and industrial areas plan. The Township has already used funds from the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program administered annually by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. The program provides grants to localities for a wide range of projects aimed at providing housing opportunities and expanding economic opportunity for low- and moderate-income households. Other funding sources the Township could explore include Section 108 Loans, which provide CDBG recipients with the ability to leverage their grant allocation to access low-cost financing for economic development, housing, and other infrastructure projects. The Township should search for opportunities to apply for these CDBG grants and other federal, state, county, or foundation grants and to support private developers and residents in seeking these resources. The Township can also consider establishing matching grant funds to achieve Master Plan goals and objectives.

INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP



COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL FRAMEWORK PLAN

Framework Plan Designation

- Commercial Infill
- Industrial Containment
- Redevelopment

Future Land Use Designation

- Corridor Commercial
- Industrial
- Waterfront Commercial



COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL FRAMEWORK

The Commercial and Industrial Areas Plan builds on the future land use plan to describe more detailed policies for the areas of the community designated for commercial and industrial development. Areas of commercial and industrial change in Waterford Township fall into one of the following three categories, which describe the type of change that should occur in each area.

- **Commercial Infill.** These areas provide opportunities for new commercial nodes in a manner that is compatible with existing uses and development patterns. Outlot development in large, underutilized parking lots is appropriate and the reuse of existing buildings should be promoted.
- **Redevelopment.** These areas have been developed with commercial uses over time, often in automobile-oriented strip patterns. Many of the existing buildings and structures are functionally obsolete. Partial or wholesale redevelopment is needed to accommodate reuse over time.
- **Industrial Reinvestment.** These areas have accommodated industrial uses in the Township's past, including light industrial establishments, manufacturing, and warehousing uses. The industrial reinvestment category emphasizes the need for reinvestment and targeted expansion of industrial and employment-related uses to allow their continuance where they've existed in the past.

Commercial & Industrial Improvement Areas

The following numbered paragraphs describe the characteristics, issues, and opportunities of Waterford Township's commercial and industrial areas, as identified on the commercial and industrial improvement areas map. Each improvement area is outlined in a color representing one of the investment categories described above. Investment in these areas should be prioritized based on the assigned category.

1. This area contains many larger employment uses in 2023 including Penn Automotive, and the GM Warehouse.

These employment uses should continue over time, and minor expansions on the same site should be encouraged to support their continued operation. This area also contains underused properties such as auto parts stores, and auto repair shops, which should continue in the short-term, but should be redeveloped to accommodate new employment uses over time. Existing mature vegetation should be preserved and new vegetation should be added to buffer the site from the neighborhoods to the north and west. Commercial frontage should continue to be maintained along Dixie Highway.

2. This area includes existing commercial properties along Dixie Highway and W Walton Boulevard, currently occupied with plazas and low-density commercial uses.

The off-street parking areas on the southwest portion of the area should be redeveloped with new buildings that provide space for both housing and commercial uses. The existing box stores and storefronts that are vacant should be repurposed with new commercial, office, or entertainment uses as market dynamics govern. New housing can also be added above the existing box stores. Buildings dedicated solely to housing, including multifamily buildings, townhomes, and rowhomes should also be developed on-site. In the short term some of these tenant spaces, such as those north of W Walton Boulevard, can be repurposed, but, in the long-term, these properties should be redeveloped for commercial service, dining, and offices in modernized spaces.

The new businesses should support and cater to the Drayton Plains Subarea south along Dixie Highway. New automobile-related uses should be limited, given the proximity to the Drayton Plains Subarea, and any new parking facilities should be encouraged to utilize cross access agreements. A mix of multifamily and single-family attached housing on properties between Williams Lake Road and the community's northern boundary should be explored to allow housing to diversify.

3. **This area includes underused sites along W Walton Boulevard east of Wormer Lake.** Some of the existing single-floor commercial buildings can accommodate some reuse over time, however, the wholesale redevelopment of these parcels with new buildings should be encouraged as market pressures necessitate. New dining uses should be prioritized on parcels with Schoolhouse Lake or Wormer Lake frontage. Off-street parking should be located along roadways, while outdoor dining and patios should be in the rear to leverage lake frontage. Adequate screening should be provided to adjacent residential properties along School House Drive and Clintonville Road. New auto service uses should be prohibited. Connections for watercraft between Wormer Drive, Schoolhouse Drive, Woodhull Drive, and Lake Oakland Drive for improved navigation should also be explored over time.

4. **This area includes sites south of Williams Lake Road west of Dixie Highway that currently accommodate storage, logistics, and auto parts uses.** These uses should be maintained and the Township should accommodate future renovations or additions on existing sites. New industrial sites should not be allowed. Buffers from the neighborhoods west of Van Zandt Road should be added as development occurs.
5. **This area encompasses the Drayton Plains Subarea that stretches along Dixie Highway.** Greater detail on the Drayton Plains Subarea subarea's development is provided in the Drayton Plains Subarea Chapter.
6. **This area includes properties along Dixie Highway between Loon Lake and Scott Lake.** It should accommodate commercial service, dining, and retail uses that serve the Drayton Plains Subarea, planned multifamily uses to the southeast, and other nearby neighborhoods. Many of the existing buildings exhibit limited viability for reuse long-term and should be redeveloped. Narrow lots should be consolidated to allow flexible development formats. Given their shallowness, parking should be to the side of structures, with rear parking developed when space is available. Cross access agreements should also be utilized to consolidate entrance points to parking facilities and increase connections between commercial uses. New automotive services should be discouraged to limit the impact on nearby residences and activity centers.
7. **This area includes properties along Dixie Highway and Scott Lake Road, which contain commercial, industrial, and residential uses.** The properties east of Scott Lake Road should be repurposed with new industrial uses over time, including fabrication, warehousing, and transportation services. Although the housing along Edinburgh Street and Winton Road should continue in the short-term, the Township should allow for their replacement with industrial businesses in the long-term. The properties south of Dixie Highway and west of Scott Lake Road should continue to house commercial service businesses including office and retail businesses. The redevelopment of properties should be encouraged over time.
8. **This area includes commercial and industrial properties along Dixie Highway east of Scott Lake Road, which contain warehousing, transportation, and logistics uses in 2023.** This corner of the Township should continue to serve as a center for new transportation, logistics, and industrial uses in the future. Given the size and depth of properties, and the existing vegetative buffering that exist from neighborhoods to the south, this area should continue to serve as a hub for more-intensive commercial and employment into the future. Consideration should be given to enhance site aesthetics, such as landscaping, and screen features, such as loading docks, from public right-of-ways.
9. **This area includes properties along Williams Lake Road which have strip plazas and low-density commercial uses.** In the short-term, the existing structures can accommodate new commercial tenants, but the redevelopment of the properties with new buildings should be promoted in the long-term to increase the quantity and quality of tenant space. New dining, commercial, and entertainment uses that use the Pontiac Lake frontage should be encouraged. These new dining and entertainment uses sit under the Oakland County Airport flight path and attract diners that want to watch the planes or high income jet owners that use the airport but spend their money elsewhere. Buildings should be situated with off-street parking along Williams Lake Road and outdoor dining along the lake. Streetscape elements such as sidewalks and vegetation should be added to function as a gateway to the community. Boat slips should be encouraged with redevelopment to attract watercraft owners to the area.
10. **This area includes a group of properties immediately south of the Oakland County International Airport that currently contain commercial service, foodservice, lodging, auto-service, and retail uses in strip plazas.** The Township should encourage the redevelopment of these properties over time; the rehabilitation of existing strip plazas should be encouraged where these properties can be reused. New development should complement and provide consistency with the airport site to the north. New businesses that support airport use such as lodging and sit-down restaurants should be promoted.
11. **This area includes properties along M-59 immediately surrounding the Clinton River.** Commercial infill on these properties should be encouraged over time with new service, retail, and foodservice uses, with particular emphasis on new businesses that serve users of the Clinton River Trail. New development should be designed to promote access to the sites for both motorists and nonmotorists, with particular attention paid to access for pedestrians and cyclists. This area also includes potential opportunities to add multifamily housing immediately north of Centre Drive.

12. This area includes parcels along M-59 east of Crescent Lake Road. The area should continue to include service, retail, and light industrial uses. Appealing landscaping should be added as infill occurs on previously developed sites to screen the area from nearby neighborhoods. Though existing residential uses are located along Tee Cee Street, these uses should be uniformly commercial uses over time to create greater compatibility between the commercial, industrial, and residential uses and limit disturbance from noise and traffic in neighborhoods.

13. This area includes commercial properties that front Elizabeth Lake Road west of Doremus Avenue which contain underused single-floor commercial structures. These commercial properties should be redeveloped over time with two-floor mixed-use developments containing commercial retail and dining uses on the first floor and residential and office uses on the second floor. A sidewalk should be added along Elizabeth Lake Road to connect with existing establishments such as 4th Tavern Lakehouse, and off-street parking should be located to the rear or side of the new buildings to create a contiguous walkable environment. The entire block northeast of Elizabeth Lake and Cooley Lake Roads should anchor the district, and upper floor uses should provide views of Crescent Lake.

14. This area includes underused commercial properties with low-density uses along Elizabeth Lake Road, Highland Road, and Cass Lake Road. These lots should accommodate new commercial uses, prioritizing businesses that serve the community's recreational needs. Existing buildings should be repurposed or replaced. The lots on the south side of W Huron Street immediately south of Elizabeth Lake Road are uniquely positioned to afford views of Otter-Sylvan Lake. These properties should be redeveloped with commercial ground floors and residential second floors to allow residents and visitors to leverage these lakefront views.

15. This area encompasses underused commercial properties west of Telegraph Road, along Summit Drive, and W Huron Street and well as properties north of Pontiac Lake Road. These sites should be redeveloped with new commercial plazas that include a flexible mix of regional-serving and local-serving commercial retail, service, and dining businesses. As the sites along Summit Drive are developed, the existing vegetation that buffers the area from neighborhoods to the west should be preserved. Similarly, new vegetation should be added along the rear property lines of commercial sites along Telegraph Road and W Huron Street. Oakland County announced its intent to relocate many of its offices and facilities back to Pontiac. The Township should work with Oakland County to explore the conversion of these properties into new commercial and employment uses as this move occurs.

16. This area represents a major redevelopment opportunity not just for Waterford Township, but for the broader Oakland County region. While the retail environment has shifted, the site is well-positioned for business park development given its access to major routes including Telegraph Road, M-59, and US 24. The northern portion of the site should be targeted for a flexible mix of business park uses including clean industry, fabrication, and research and development. This site is relatively isolated, which means that businesses that generate more off-site impacts, such as noise, could be permitted. Any outdoor storage should be screened from view from public rights-of-way with attractive fencing and landscaping. Development should be located within a cohesive business park environment with high-quality landscaping, signage, lighting, and building materials that enhance the area's appearance. The southern portion of the site that has frontage on and visibility from N Telegraph and Elizabeth Lake Roads should be redeveloped for commercial development that complements commercial development to the south and east of the site.

17. This area includes commercial properties along Cass Elizabeth Road at Parkway Street. This area should serve as a small commercial node that provides recreational-related retail and dining establishments to visitors visiting Cass, Elizabeth, and Sylvan Lakes. Existing dining and water-based recreation uses should continue to serve these purposes and new ones should be added. The existing waterfront apartments that exist in the area should continue.

18. This area includes sites along Cooley Lake Road west of Williams Lake Road. In 2023, few of the buildings in the site remain market viable and many should be redeveloped. New one-to three floor structures containing ground-floor commercial, dining, and retail uses and upper-floor office or residential uses should be the primary development pattern. The site features many narrow, long parcels, which should be consolidated, where necessary, to spur this reuse. Multifamily development set behind commercial or mixed-use buildings can be added where deeper lots exist, west of Williams Lake Road. The Four Corners Lakeside development could be used as an example. Vehicle and pedestrian access should be provided between adjacent sites and large surface parking such as the parking area at Waterford Lanes should be reused.

CHAPTER 7

PARKS, RECREATION, AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Waterford Township contains numerous public and private recreational facilities. These facilities provide residents and visitors access to the community's inland lakes, the Clinton River, and its woodlands and other natural areas, which are a fundamental contributor to the Township's quality of life.

PARKS AND RECREATION

In 2023, the Township maintains 16 parks and facilities, which encompass 860.7 acres of parkland in total. The Township's facilities range in size and amenities offered, but their total acreage results in 11.8 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents. This exceeds the national average of 10.6 acres per 1,000 residents found in the 2024 National Recreation and Park Association Performance Review. Examples of individual sites include public canoe launches on the Clinton River, sports and recreational facilities at Civic Center Park, and a variety of trails, hiking, and cross-country skiing amenities at Hess-Hathaway Park. The National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) categorizes parks depending on their size and provision of different amenities. Most of Waterford Township's parks are defined as Community Parks, which are relatively large facilities that serve users outside the immediate vicinity, or Special Use Facilities, which serve a particular activity or purpose such as kayaking or team sports. The Township is currently drafting the *2024 Charter Township of Waterford, Oakland County Parks and Recreation Master Plan*, which provides a comprehensive inventory and lists recommendations for further improvements to parks and recreational facilities in Waterford.

Another 10 park facilities exist in the Township that are maintained by local elementary schools; many of these facilities accommodate youth recreational activities. Oakland County also owns and operates Waterford Oaks County Park on the east side of the Township, which includes diverse recreational amenities. The State of Michigan owns and operates Pontiac Lake Recreation Area and Dodge 4 State Park, which afford visitors access to inland lakes. Altogether, these non-Township maintained owned park provide an additional 776 acres of publicly accessible parkland. Around 500 acres of private parkland are accessible for a minor fee or reserved for certain users. A full list of the Township's parks and those maintained by other entities are shown in the table on the following page and on the parks inventory map on page 50.

Five-Year Parks and Recreation Plan

Waterford Township maintains a five-year parks and recreation plan to establish goals and improvements to its park system. The Plan was most recently updated and adopted in 2019. The plan engaged the community through an online survey to determine residents' priorities for the Township's parks and recreation system. The plan used this input to establish a series of goals and recommendations to enable the Township's overall visions for the park system, which serves as the basis to dedicate local funds and acquire external funding, such as grants, for projects and improvements to the park system.

Though the 2019 parks and recreation plan found that the Township currently has an adequate quantity of parkland relative to its population, it noted that very few neighborhood-serving or mini parks exist, which are smaller facilities that residents typically travel to on-foot. The plan did not recommend that the Township develop any new neighborhood or mini parks due to the current adequate quantity of park space and predominance of automobile travel in the community. The plan defined a need for several park facilities, including a new Community Center facility. The five-year parks and recreation plan will be maintained and updated to establish a shared vision and actionable path forward to create a robust park system.

Clinton River Riverwalk

Along the section of the Clinton River as it passes under M-59 is the Clinton River Riverwalk, which is a paved bike/pedestrian trail extending from Riverside Elementary School in the south and Crescent Lake Road in the north. Having a trail along the river provides a safe north/south route for walkers, bikers, runners, and more. The Township plans to extend the riverwalk along the length of the Clinton River within the Township. The Riverwalk should eventually connect to the Drayton Plains subarea district along Frembes Road. The Township should work with other jurisdictions in the region and at the state level to eventually connect the Riverwalk to the Iron Belle Trail, a long-distance hiking and biking trail extending from Detroit, MI to Ironwood, MI in the Upper Peninsula. Doing this would further the Township's presence as a recreation destination.

and encourage visitors to spend time in the Town Center district.

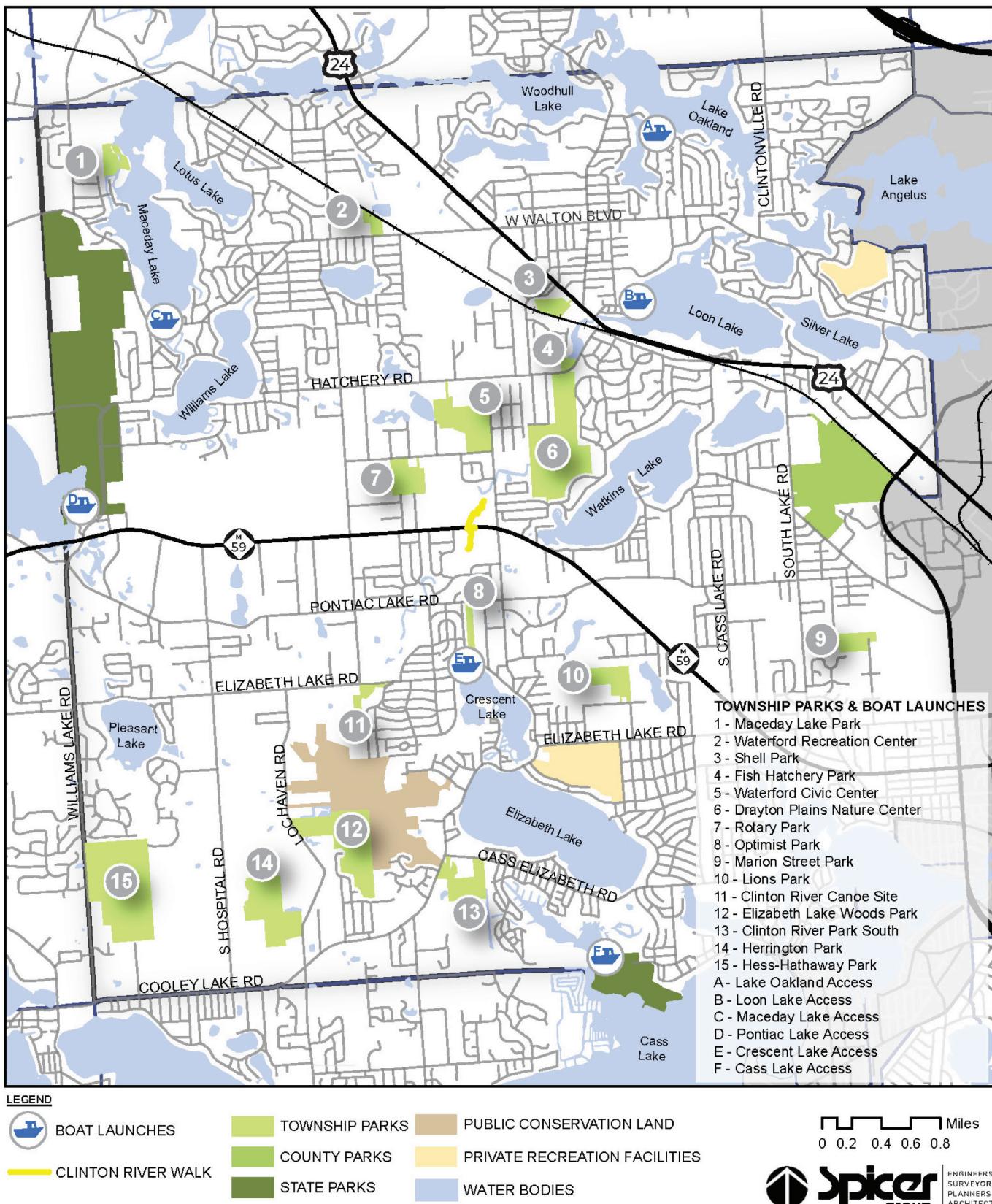
Township-Owned Parks and Recreational Facilities

Facility Name	Location	Park Type (NRPA Classification)	Amenities
Civic Center Soccer Fields	West of 5200 Civic Center Drive	Community	6 soccer fields, warming house
Herrington Park	1216 Lochaven Road	Community	Concessions, restrooms, two lighted ball fields, picnic area, and picnic shelter
Hess-Hathaway Park	825 S Williams Lake Road	Urban	Restored farmhouse, animal exhibit barn, ball field, volleyball courts, horseshoe courts, picnic shelters, gazebo, accessible children's playscape, restrooms, community meeting room, nature trails for hiking and cross country skiing, group hayrides, farm animal tours
Lions Park	4250 Fenmore Avenue	Community	Picnic shelter, restrooms, lighted ball field, and picnic area
Rotary Park	5485 Tubbs Road	Community	Picnic shelter, restrooms, concession stand, ball fields, play area, five soccer fields
Shell Park	4373 Dixie Highway	Special Use	Three ball fields, picnic shelter, grills, and tables, concession stand, restrooms
Clinton River Canoe Site	5971 Elizabeth Lake Road	Special Use	Public canoe landing, children's play apparatus area, picnic shelter, grill, and tables
Clinton River Park South	5250 Cass Elizabeth Road	Natural Resource Area	Undeveloped passive parkland and nature preserve
Clinton River Walk	Along Clinton River north and south of M-59	Park Trail	Paved trail and along a section of the Clinton River
Fish Hatchery Park	4490 Hatchery Road	Special Use	Renovated historic farmhouse, office and museum of the Waterford Historical Society, restrooms, boardwalk, fishing, canoeing, and picnic shelters
Waterford Recreation Center	5640 Williams Lake Road	Special Use	Activity center for senior, youth, and adult programs, room rentals, enrichment classes, gymnasium, and dining room
Elizabeth Lake Woods Park	Accessible off Lochaven Road and Cooley Lake Road	Natural Resource Area	Undeveloped passive parkland, nature preserve, canoeing
Marion Street Park	Northern end of Marion Avenue	Natural Resource Area	Nature trails, handicap-accessible trail, observation decks
Optimist Park	5320 Elizabeth Lake Road	Community	Concession stand, restrooms, ball fields, picnic shelter, picnic area, lighted basketball court
Drayton Plains Nature Center	2125 Denby Drive	Natural Resource Area	Interpretive nature center building, fish hatchery ponds, hiking trails and a picnic shelter, indoor meeting room available for rent

Maceday Lake Park	Northern end of Rich Street	Natural Resource Area	Undeveloped waterfront land passive and nature preserve
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Non-Township-Owned Parks and Recreational Facilities

Facility Name	Location	Park Type (NRPA Classification)	Amenities
David Grayson Elementary	3800 W Walton Boulevard	School-Park	Playground equipment and fields, one basketball court, indoor gymnasium
Dodge 4 State Park	4250 Parkway Street	Regional Park	Cass Lake beach
Donelson Hills Elementary	2690 Wewoka Road	School-Park	Playground equipment and fields, one basketball court, indoor gymnasium
Eliza Seaman Leggett School	3621 Pontiac Lake Road	School-Park	Playground equipment and fields, one basketball court, indoor gymnasium
Haviland Elementary	5305 Cass Elizabeth Road	School-Park	Playground equipment and fields, two tennis courts, one basketball court, indoor gymnasium
Kinglsey-Montgomery Training	4265 Halkirk Drive	School-Park	Playground equipment and indoor gymnasium
Knudsen Elementary	5449 Crescent Lake Road	School-Park	Playground equipment and fields, one basketball court, indoor gymnasium
Riverside Elementary	5280 Farm Road	School-Park	Playground equipment and indoor gymnasium
Schoolcraft Elementary	6400 Maceday Drive	School-Park	Playground equipment and fields, one basketball court, indoor gymnasium
Thomas M Cooley Elementary	2000 Highfield Road	School-Park	Playground equipment, one basketball court, indoor gymnasium
William Beaumont Elementary	6532 Elizabeth Lake Road	School-Park	Playground equipment and fields, one basketball court, indoor gymnasium
Pontiac Lake Recreation Area	7800 Gale Road	Regional Park	Hiking, biking, and equestrian trails, campground, picnic area
Waterford Oaks County Park	1702 Scott Lake Road	Regional Park	Waterpark, BMX track, hiking trails, accessible playscape, sports courts



Source: 2024 Charter Township of Waterford, Oakland County Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Waterford Recreation Center

The Township's Recreation Center is located along Williams Lake Road west of Dixie Highway. The Recreation Center is operated by the Township's Parks and Recreation Department and offers a rentable space for events and parties, a gym and fitness room, and space for senior, youth, and adult programs. Though the Recreation Center provides valuable programming and space, residents noted that the facility is outdated and should be replaced with a new center. Several members of the community want the new facility near the downtown subarea along Dixie Highway.

Recommendations

Waterford Parks and Recreation is responsible for maintaining and improving the Township's parks and recreation facilities in partnership with agencies at the State and County level. The five-year parks and recreation plan defined a list of projects to further the Township's Park system, and several of the key recommendations are listed below.

The Township and its Parks and Recreation Department should take the following measures to support the provisions of quality parks and recreation facilities:

- Continue to update the five-year Parks and Recreation plan every five years to establish an up-to-date schedule of improvements to the park system.
- Develop new amenities and improvements at various Township Parks to address evolving recreation needs as defined in the adopted five-year Parks and Recreation Plan.
- Continue to gauge whether new mini parks and neighborhood-serving parks are appropriate in the Township as new nonmotorized trails and sidewalks are added over time.
- Allocate and/or seek funding to renovate or replace the Waterford Township Recreation Center.
- Ensure that public parks are safe.
- Provide both passive and active facilities for a variety of ages and abilities of the population.
- Continue to work with existing recreation partners in the community to provide programs, leagues, and special events. Explore options for new and expanded partnerships to provide additional recreational opportunities.
- Encourage the development of pathways, sidewalks, and bike lanes to the Township's parks.
- Add walking and multi-use paths within existing parks and improve existing path surfaces.
- Add canoe/kayak launches at strategic locations.
- Retain existing parkland and acquire new public lands to meet the recreational needs of the community.
- Work with local organizations to provide unique programming opportunities at the Township's recreational sites and venues.
- Preserve and protect open space and other important natural features in Waterford Township.
- Improve barrier-free access to existing recreation facilities.
- Ensure that improvements and upgrades to the Township's park facilities are accessible.
- Strive to meet universal design standards with new signage, park amenities and facilities.
- Coordinate with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) to maintain MDNR-owned lakes as assets for the Waterford community.
- Extend the Clinton River Riverwalk along the entire length of the river and coordinate with outside partners to connect it to the Iron Belle Trail.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Waterford Township's natural features, including its abundant waterbodies, are among its most distinctive attributes and set the community apart from others in southeast Michigan. To a large degree, the opportunity to live near one of its inland lakes catalyzed Waterford's residential growth during the middle part of the 20th Century and underpins residents' quality of life today. During the community outreach phase of the Master Plan process, participants emphasized the importance of preserving the quality of the community's natural features, especially the inland lakes, while allowing greater access to these amenities for

residents and visitors.

Inland Lakes

Waterford Township contains 34 inland lakes, which comprise nearly 3,300 acres, and constitute around 15 percent of the Township's total area. They are a defining feature of the land cover map on the following page. The largest of these lakes include Cass Lake, Elizabeth Lake, Maceday-Lotus Lake, Otter-Sylvan Lake, Watkins Lake, and Woodhull Lake. Much of the Township's inland lakes are developed with private residences, although public access to Cass Lake and Pontiac Lake exist at Dodge 4 State Park and Pontiac Lake State Recreation Area, respectively. Water quality in the lakes is affected by property owners' decisions, although the Township can exert some degree of control through its zoning ordinance.

Tree Cover and Open Space

When gauging Waterford Township's current land use, it is important to consider the land cover of each parcel. Although the Future Land Use Map on page 28 gives the impression that most of the Township is developed, the Land Cover Map on the following page reveals that this is not entirely true. More than half (58%) of the Township's land cover consists of open space/grasslands or trees. When combined with the percentage of water cover, nearly 73% of the Township contains some form of natural land cover.



Land Cover: Number of Acres, Percentage of Land Area

Buildings: 1,779 acres	7.89%	Other Pavement: 646 acres	2.87%
Railway: 27 acres	0.12%	Trees: 6,374 acres	28.27%
Roads: 1,247 acres	5.53%	Open space / grassland: 6,703 acres	29.73%
Driveways: 941 acres	4.17%	Bare land: 297 acres	1.32%
Parking Lots: 944 acres	4.19%	Water: 3,356 acres	14.88%
Sidewalks: 236 acres	1.04%		



Source: Oakland County, Michigan (2020)

Clinton River

Waterford Township is primarily within the Clinton River Watershed, with its western portion in the Huron River Watershed. The term watershed refers to the geographic area within which groundwater and precipitation flow into a waterbody. The Clinton River flows through the center of the community and travels from its headlands just north of the Township in Oakland County to Lake Saint Clair to the Township's east. Waterford Township's location upstream from other Oakland and Macomb County communities means that land use decisions in the Township affect the water quality of communities located downstream. In addition, Waterford residents depend upon groundwater recharge for its well-based municipal water system. Though the Clinton River remains a high-quality natural asset, threats from stormwater and the use of pesticide or fertilizer have the potential to affect its quality.

Floodplain and Wetlands

Waterford Township has considerable areas of floodplain and wetlands, which are largely concentrated west of Elizabeth Lake near the Clinton River and south of Watkins Lake near Fiddle Lake and Lake Geneva. Developing within floodplains is a risk, as damage that results from frequent flooding can be costly. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), which administers the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), regulates development activities in the floodplain and encourages local governments to adopt higher standards for floodplain development. Future development should not be located within floodplains and existing development located within the floodplain should be made more resilient or relocated outside of the floodplain.

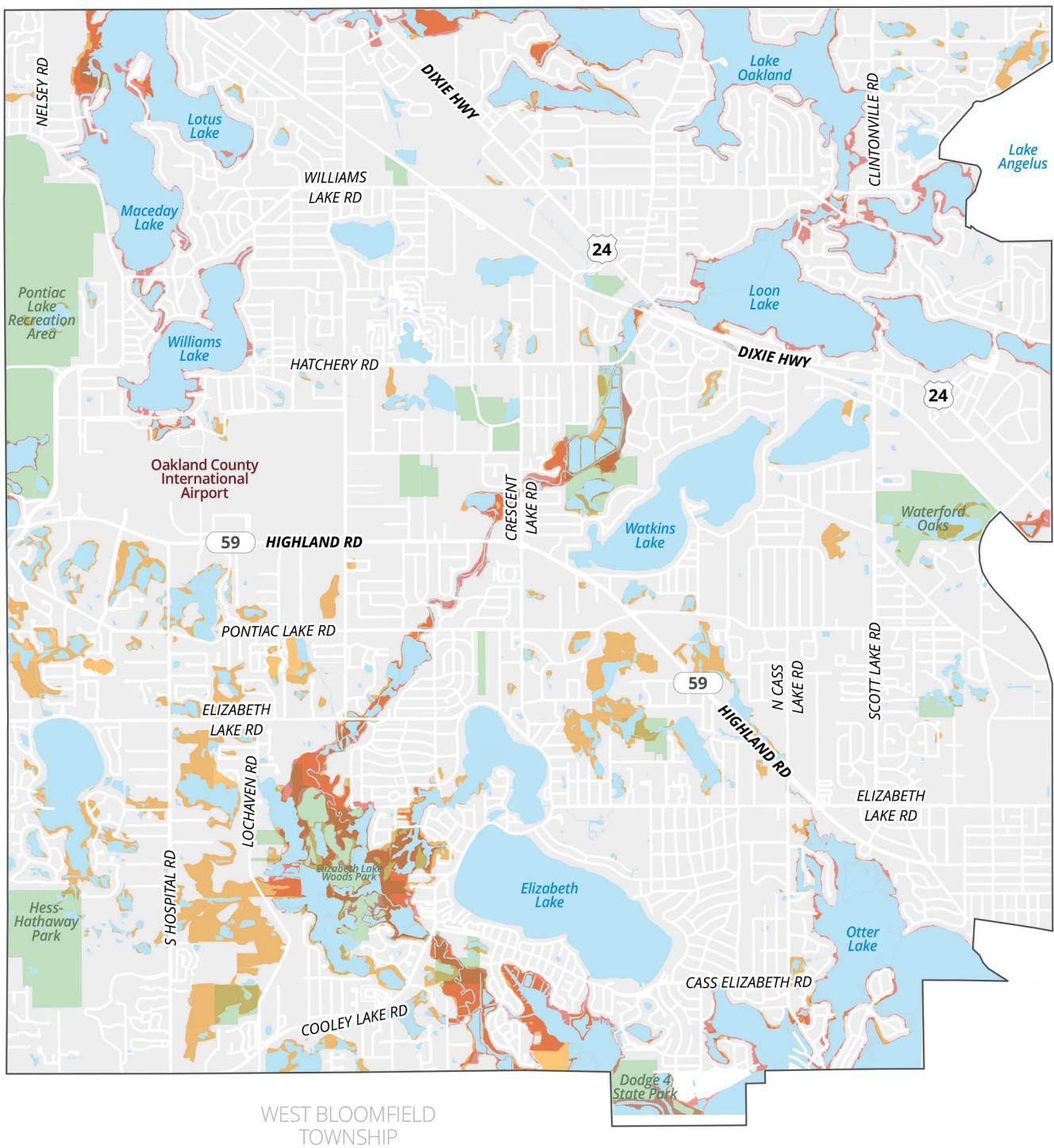
Natural Features Setback

The Township's zoning ordinance contains a natural features preservation section that requires a setback of 25 feet from the boundary or edge of a wetland or from the ordinary high-water mark of rivers or lakes. The Section limits soil removal and materials deposit, as well as the construction and placement of structures within the setback area. Retaining these regulations presents a key opportunity to retain and enhance the health of the Township's waterbodies. Some communities have enhanced their natural features setback standards by requiring or encouraging the addition of native landscaping on private property surrounding lakefront and riverfront. Waterford Township should consider similar measures to further ensure the quality of the Township's water features.

Oakland County Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CISMA) and Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI)

The Oakland County Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CISMA) collaborates with townships, villages, cities, county agencies, educational institutions, and conservation non-governmental organizations dedicated to managing invasive species. Established in December 2014, CISMA's mission includes preventing the spread of invasive species, raising public awareness, responding to new detections, and implementing long-term control measures. The partnership now comprises over 40 members, including local and county governments, non-profits, and universities, working together to protect and restore ecosystems. The Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI) supports these efforts by providing essential data and mapping for invasive species monitoring and biodiversity conservation. This collaboration is crucial for maintaining the health and sustainability of Waterford's natural resources.

INDEPENDENCE
TOWNSHIP



FLOODPLAINS & WETLANDS

- Bodies of Water
- Floodplain
- Wetlands
- Parks/Open Space

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles



Landscaping Standards and Other Environmental Provisions

The Township currently has greenbelt provisions in its Zoning Ordinance. The Zoning Ordinance also specifies interior lot landscaping requirements, including a set quantity of landscaping near building entrances, along building foundations, pedestrian walkways, and along service areas. These standards are essential to enhancing stormwater retention and environmental performance throughout the community. Many communities in Michigan have stronger landscaping standards that prescribe a defined quantity of native trees, shrubs, and other vegetation on sites, off-street parking areas, and around building foundations. Waterford Township should consider updating its landscaping standards to ensure enhanced environmental performance.

Stormwater

Stormwater runoff from properties is a continual challenge in Waterford Township. Rain, sleet, snow, and other precipitation falls on properties in the Township and can collect on lots with a large degree of impervious surface such as those along Dixie Highway and M-59. This can cause damage to structures and features such as off-street parking lots when stormwater freezes and thaws. Stormwater precipitation can also runoff into waterbodies such as the Township's inland lakes or the Clinton River, which can induce flooding or increase the quantity of pollution flowing into these waterbodies.

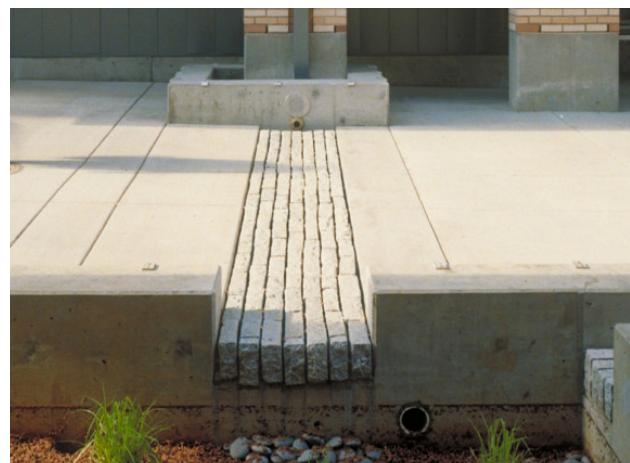
Stormwater Management Resources

Currently, the Oakland County Water Resource Commissioner has the responsibility of monitoring, controlling, maintaining, and building storm drainage systems in Waterford Township. The Road Commission for Oakland County and Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) are also responsible for monitoring, controlling, maintaining, and building storm drainage systems connected with its road system. There are also natural drainage systems that the Water Resource Commissioner does not take responsibility for and are the responsibility of the land owner or subdivision. The Development of a Stormwater Drainage Master Plan would help the Township identify the strengths and weaknesses in the existing stormwater drainage facilities and provide a significant planning and budgeting tool for the Township and surrounding governmental agencies to reduce, if not eliminate, the system's flaws and weaknesses.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Green infrastructure represents an approach to stormwater management that utilizes natural or engineered systems to mimic natural landscapes and capture, cleanse, and reduce stormwater runoff before it makes its way into the traditional stormwater piping system. Implementing green infrastructure as redevelopment/development occurs would help decrease the Township's impact on its natural environment and has been shown, in some cases, to help reduce long-term infrastructure costs.

The Township should consider utilizing Township-owned open space and right-of-way to install trees and native landscapes that increase stormwater absorption. Additionally, the Stormwater Drainage Master Plan should include recommendations for development ordinances that encourage green infrastructure, such as offering developers an incentive if they commit to reducing impervious cover. Examples could be the utilization of permeable surfaces in the pavement of parking lots or the installation of rain gardens. These types of measures will also ensure that as new development is brought into the Township, no negative stormwater related impacts will occur to existing residents, businesses, and infrastructure capacity.



Water Quality Resources

Waterford Township has several measures in place to regulate and ensure the quality of its waterbodies. Chapter 8 of the Code of Ordinances contains a wetlands protection ordinance that limits the construction of structures and any dredging or other soil disturbance. The Township has a stormwater management ordinance within its code of ordinances that requires the approval of a stormwater management plan showing on-site retention and detention of stormwater for major development activities. The Township also has a Wellhead Protection Program to protect public community water supplies from contaminants. The program defines 10-year capture zones around public wellheads and controls activities that could adversely impact water quality in these zones.

Woodlands

Waterford Township contains several areas of natural woodlands, native landscape vegetation, and unique natural features. Extensive wooded areas are present in recreation areas such as Elizabeth Lake Woods Park and Hess-Hathaway Park, and along the Clinton River corridor. Wooded areas provide critical habitats for plant and animal species, enhanced air quality, and recreational amenities.

Waterford Township established regulations to assist with the preservation of woodlands within Article 7 of the Township's Code of Ordinances which defines woodland management standards and requires woodland management permits for any removal of protected trees and establishes standards for the replacement or relocation of removed trees. These standards will be key to enhancing tree preservation as development continues over time. Some communities require a greater quantity of replacement trees for any removed trees, depending on the removed tree's size.

Recommendations

A mix of appropriate environmental regulation and community education will be key to retaining the quality of the natural environment in keeping with the community's priorities. The Township should consider the following actions.

- Promote low-intensity land uses where natural conditions are least capable of supporting significant development, such as in floodplains, wetlands, and wooded areas.
- Direct unattractive development away from sensitive natural resources including inland lakes, the Clinton River, floodplains, and wetlands.
- Continue to protect the Township's existing wetlands to preserve water quality, stabilize stormwater runoff, recharge groundwater, and provide fish and wildlife habitats.
- Promote conservation development techniques where mature vegetation and trees exist on select areas that can accommodate residential development (see Chapter 5 for greater detail).
- Conserve woodlands to protect water and soil quality, increase air quality, buffer noise pollution, moderate local climate and storm hazards, preserve wildlife habitats, and preserve aesthetic values and community beauty.
- Promote the preservation, protection, and diversification of trees and vegetation throughout the Township and continue to evaluate whether the tree preservation standards in the Code of Ordinances should be updated.
- Encourage the use of native plants to minimize the hazardous effects of invasive species in required landscaped areas.
- Encourage the preservation of natural site grades, rather than alteration through grading, to enhance stormwater management.
- Continue to evaluate the on-site landscaping standards in the Zoning Ordinance in case they need to be updated or specified.
- Maintain the Natural Features Setback requirements in the Zoning Ordinance and continue to evaluate whether the standards should be updated.
- Require the preservation and protection of groundwater recharge areas as open space or low-density uses to retain as much of the permeable surface and water retaining characteristics as possible.
- Consider developing a Stormwater Drainage Master Plan to help the Township identify the strengths and weaknesses in the existing stormwater drainage facilities.
- Encourage and promote the restoration and enhancement of natural vegetation and topographical features, particularly along stream corridors and waterways.
- Monitor and control surface water runoff to prevent flooding and erosion.
- Educate the community on the care and use of herbicide and fertilizer sprays to preserve and protect stream corridors, waterways, and their natural drainage and runoff channels.
- Regulate, preserve, and protect natural areas identified as essential to maintaining Waterford Township's unique heritage, character, and habitat.
- Consider tree protection requirements for new construction.
- Explore the use of performance bonds to address reforestation needs in the event that a proposed project fails after tree clearing.
- Promote the integration of green infrastructure into new development as a means of managing stormwater naturally on-site.
- Draft an ordinance to require new construction to match the existing grades of adjacent properties.
- Aspire to be a Tree City certified community.

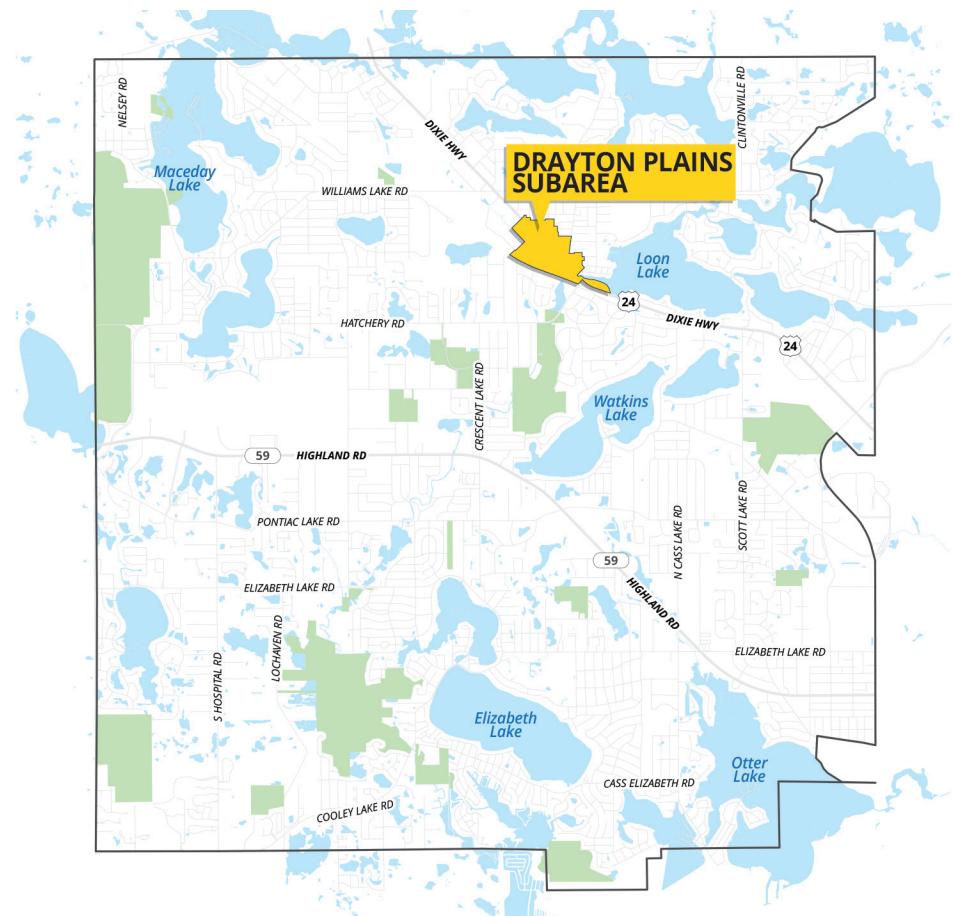
CHAPTER 8

DRAYTON PLAINS SUBAREA



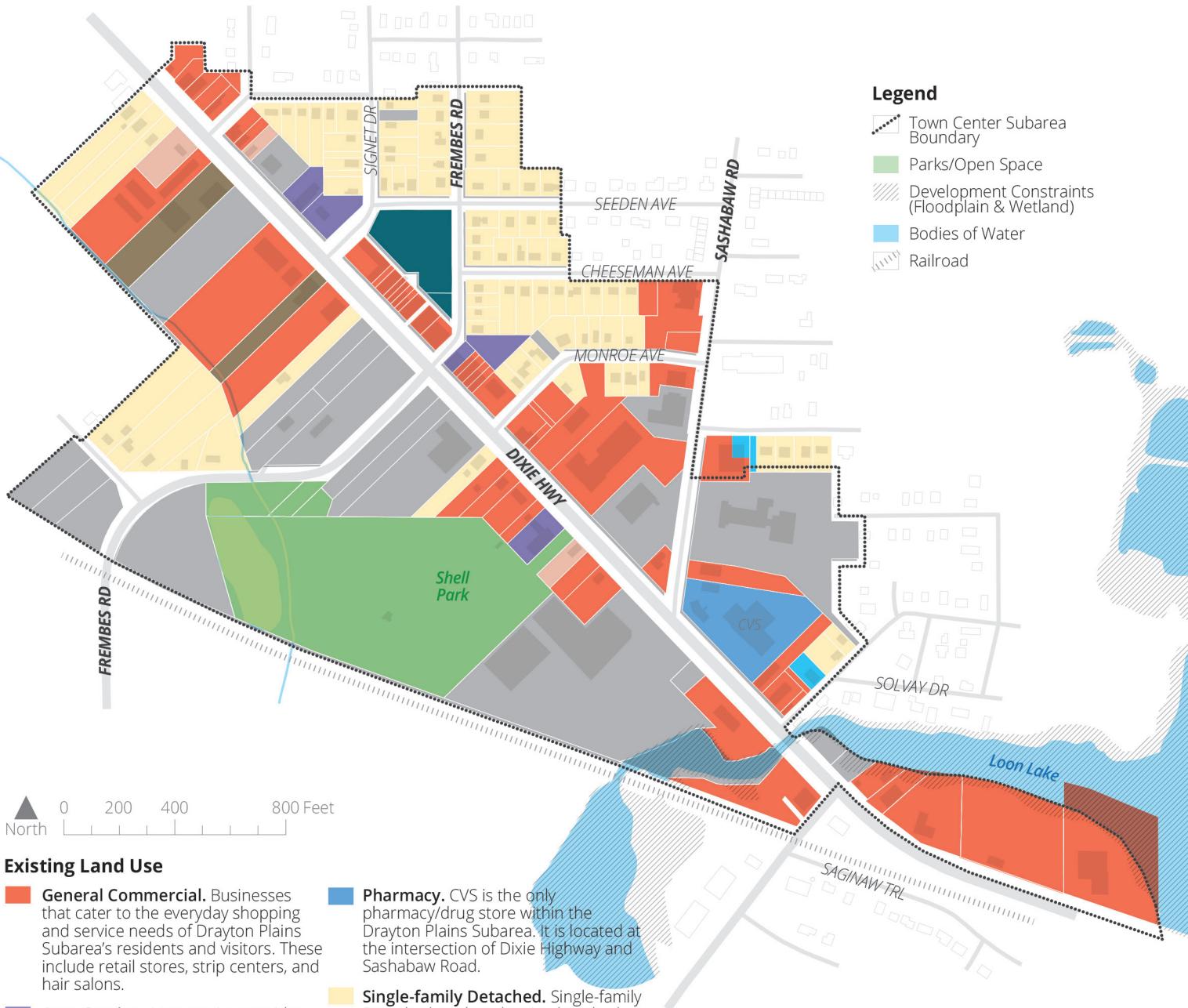
As part of the Master Plan, the Drayton Plains Subarea Plan provides general recommendations for improving local land use, access, mobility, function, and character. The Subarea Plan provides direction for improving the Drayton Plains Subarea over time. Through targeted reinvestment in the Drayton Plains Subarea, the Township can elevate Waterford Township's community image, user experience, and quality of place to draw in desirable development over time.

The Drayton Plains Subarea is located in the northern portion of Waterford Township. The subarea primarily consists of non-residential land uses along Dixie Highway between Loon Lake and Meinrad Drive and along Sashabaw Road between Dixie Highway and Seeden Street. Dixie Highway is one of the Township's two major east-west corridors and provides significant vehicular traffic to the Drayton Plains Subarea. Loon Lake is an important recreational asset, and there are opportunities to strengthen pedestrian and bicycle connections between the Drayton Plains Subarea and Loon Lake.



DRAYTON PLAINS SUBAREA

EXISTING LAND USE



DRAYTON PLAINS SUBAREA

LAND USE FRAMEWORK



LAND USE FRAMEWORK

A mix of appropriate land uses is important for establishing a self-sustaining and exciting environment with a critical mass of activity in the Drayton Plains Subarea. The intent is to increase the liveliness of the Drayton Plains Subarea by adding more housing within walking distance of a complementary mix of retail, restaurant, and service uses, and to take advantage of Dixie Highway's high traffic flow and proximity to Loon Lake. The proposed land uses for the Drayton Plains Subarea align with the Master Plan's Land Use Framework.

The Drayton Plains Subarea should continue to be strengthened and improved as a unique environment in Waterford Township. The Township should remain flexible and promote a variety of land uses to diversify consumer options, increase its tax base, and foster the desired energy in the Drayton Plains Subarea.

Single-family Detached

Residential uses include all single-family detached homes of varying lot sizes. Context-sensitive housing, such as duplexes, should be introduced through infill development to promote greater housing choices within the Drayton Plains Subarea.

Single-family Attached

Single-family Attached consists of duplexes, triplexes, and townhomes. They complement single-family detached neighborhoods' built form and encourage greater variety of housing options and slightly denser housing developments in the Drayton Plains Subarea. They also serve as a transition from the Drayton Plains Subarea's commercial uses into the residential neighborhoods.

Single-family attached are generally located around the existing public parking lot, which has the opportunity to accommodate a public plaza that would be extended into Dixie Highway through Signet Drive.

Multifamily

Multifamily uses include buildings containing multiple dwelling units that are vertically stacked with shared common areas and entrances. In the Drayton Plains Subarea, multifamily can be located within upper stories of mixed-use buildings. Similar to single-family attached, multifamily help increase the range of housing choices within the Drayton Plains Subarea and the Township.

Corridor Commercial

Corridor Commercial includes a mix of retail, commercial service, dining, and professional office uses. Within the Drayton Plains Subarea, these areas mostly front Dixie Highway and Sashabaw Road and should contribute towards an inviting environment for pedestrians and bicyclists. Future Corridor Commercial developments should possess the following design features:

- Minimal curb cut towards the main roadway.
- Buildings front the roadways while parking is located at the rear of buildings.
- Provide sidewalks along roadways.
- Safe and direct connection between building entrance and the public right-of-way.
- Sufficient parking and perimeter landscaping.
- Adequate level of ground-floor transparency and lighting.
- Minimal auto-oriented pole signs.

Larger corridor commercial uses, such as the future commercial use at 4315 Dixie Highway, should feature a continuous building frontage along Dixie Highway to strengthen the Drayton Plains Subarea's envisioned character. It should also have sufficient perimeter landscaping against Shell Park and Clinton River to provide a buffer between the commercial and recreational uses.

Mixed-use

The intent of mixed-use developments is to provide an appropriate mix of land uses by locating retail and restaurants on the ground floor to create a more inviting and interesting pedestrian experience, while accommodating office/service-oriented and residential in the upper floors. Mixed-use developments in the Drayton Plains Subarea mostly front Dixie Highway and Frembes Road with parking at the rear of buildings.

Parks & Open Space

Parks and Open Space areas include Shell Park and existing wooded areas. These areas will likely remain.

Public Plaza & Parking Area

A public gathering space can create a unique destination in the Drayton Plains Subarea. Vacating the right-of-way on Signet Drive between Dixie Highway and Seeden Avenue provides opportunities for a larger public gathering space with frontage to Dixie Highway. Improvements should include outdoor dining/seating space and landscaping. The public plaza should extend into the existing driveway at the rear of the buildings along Dixie Highway between Signet Drive and Frembes Road. This will require adding perimeter landscaping between the parking lot and the driveway. The existing open space at the southwest corner of Seeden Avenue and Frembes Road may accommodate additional parking space.

DRAYTON PLAINS SUBAREA

REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Several sites in the Town Center subarea are highlighted for their redevelopment potential. Redevelopment of these sites may have a dramatic effect on the Town Center's experience and built form.



- 1 **Multifamily Redevelopment.** This vacant site presents an opportunity to construct multifamily developments within the Drayton Plains Subarea. Doing so would improve housing choices in the area and increase the Drayton Plains Subarea's customer base. Parking should be located at the rear of the building.
- 2a **Single-family Attached Transition.** The lots facing towards the existing parking lots have the potential to transition into single-family attached uses. The lots provide sufficient depth to accommodate rear-loaded townhomes. Their scale and design should complement the character of the surrounding residential neighborhoods.
- 2b
- 2c
- 2d

- 3a **Mixed-Use Anchors.** These corner lots present a unique opportunity for mid-rise mixed-use developments within the Drayton Plains Subarea. The buildings should function as gateways into the Drayton Plains Subarea by fronting Dixie Highway and Frembes Road. Parking should be located at the rear. Depending on the site programming, the rear side of both lots may accommodate additional multifamily buildings.
- 3b





4 Public Plaza Redevelopment.

The Township should consider establishing a public plaza along Signet Drive to complement adjacent commercial development. Signet Drive right-of-way (between Dixie Highway and Seeden Avenue) can be utilized to pilot the plaza concept, and if successful, consideration should be given to expanding the plaza to the underutilized site to the west along Seeden Avenue. The plaza should incorporate sufficient landscaping, shading, seating areas, and opportunities to host public and community events.

CASE STUDY: NINE MILE REDESIGN

In 2019, the City of Oak Park, MI began the transformation of Nine Mile Road. The study area ran along Nine Mile Road from McCain Drive to the eastern border of Oak Park. This project created two pocket parks, which were former streets connecting Nine Mile Road with the adjacent neighborhood, Seneca Pocket Park, and Sherman Pocket Park. The project intended to create a vibrant streetscape along Nine Mile Road to stimulate local economic development. The project's key features include a road diet, angled on-street parking, the addition of on-street bike lanes, a trailhead, and the creation of new public spaces, including linear parks and pocket parks.

The importance of pocket parks was highlighted in the City's 2014 Strategic Economic Development Plan. The City sought to activate spaces not typical for recreational use. This idea was tested in 2017 with a "pop-up park" and was met with a positive response from the overall community and the adjacent residents. The City decided to build on this experiment by making the pocket parks permanent. Both parks feature landscaping, creative lighting and sitting areas. The Seneca Park features a climbing set for kids and outdoor games such as cornhole and a giant chess set. The City Funding for this project came from the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, the Michigan Department of Transportation, Oakland County, kaBOOM!, the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan, and the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation.



5 Vacant Lot by Shell Park. This vacant lot, given its proximity to the existing rail line, Shell Park, and the residential neighborhood, has the potential to be developed into multifamily buildings. This lot is owned by the same property owner who owns Site #3a, and potential exists for a larger, more comprehensive redevelopment of both sites simultaneously.

6 Oak Electric Site. Oak Electric has acquired this site to expand its operating capacities. Though the proposed development is likely to consist of a series of standalone commercial/office buildings, there are opportunities to incorporate a continuous building frontage along Dixie Highway to promote a more continuous streetwall along Dixie Highway.

7 3059 Sashabaw Road. This vacant building may be rehabilitated to accommodate medical offices or other commercial services that do not require much visibility from major roadways. If this site were to be redeveloped, the future redevelopment should be accessed via the existing strip mall to the south, rather than the existing driveway on Sashabaw Road. Consolidating access points would expand the site's buildable area while minimizing potential traffic conflict points.

8 Drayton Plains Elementary School. The vacant Academy of Waterford building has the potential to be rehabilitated to house multifamily lofts. The rear of this lot can accommodate townhomes and duplexes to further increase housing diversity in the Drayton Plains Subarea while providing a physical transition to the single-family detached neighborhoods to the east. If the Academy of Waterford were to be demolished, the site should have multifamily developments that front Sashabaw Road with parking in the rear.



DRAYTON PLAINS SUBAREA SUBAREA FRAMEWORK

Public Gathering Space. A public gathering space can create a unique destination in the Town Center. Vacating the right-of-way on Signet Drive provides opportunities for a larger public gathering space with frontage on Dixie Highway. Improvements should include outdoor dining/seating space and landscaping.

Public Parking Lot. The public parking lot should be reconfigured and landscaped to accommodate the recommended public gathering space. This facility would provide a central location for visitors to park and walk around the Town Center.

Cross-Access. In addition to removing excess curb cuts, the Township should work with property owners to establish cross-access between non-residential properties. This would enable customers to travel between businesses on a parallel network and eliminate unnecessary trips onto Dixie Highway.

Wayfinding to Shell Park. Shell Park currently does not have any signage. Installing wayfinding will better inform residents and visitors of this amenity.

Redevelopment Opportunity Site. Higher density development should be encouraged at redevelopment opportunity sites, with less dense development or stepbacks used to ensure new investment complements the surrounding neighborhood.

Mixed-use Buildings at Dixie & Frembes. The vacant corner sites at Dixie Highway & Frembes Road present a redevelopment opportunity for 3- to 4-story mixed-use buildings that would help create a focal point in the Town Center. The buildings would have deeper front and street-side setback to provide room for wider sidewalks and outdoor dining space. Uses may include ground-floor commercial and upper-story office/apartment units.



Legend

- [Boundary Line] Town Center Subarea Boundary
- [Green Box] Parks/Open Space
- [Hatched Box] Development Constraints (Floodplain & Wetland)
- [Blue Box] Bodies of Water
- [Yellow Box] Railroad
- [Blue Circle] Intersection Improvement
- [Purple Circle] Gateway
- [Red Hexagon] Wayfinding
- [Red X] Remove Curb Cut
- [Blue Line with Dots] Widened Sidewalk with Landscaped Buffer
- [Blue Box] Public Gathering Space
- [Blue Dots] Vacated Right-of-Way
- [Green Dots] Lakefront Amenity Area
- [Green Line with Dots] Trail Connection
- [Green Line with Dots] Site Screening & Buffering
- [Orange Line with Dots] Roadway Reconfiguration
- [Yellow Box] Redevelopment Opportunity Site

Dixie Highway. Roadway reconfiguration should explore strategies to calm traffic speeds along Dixie Highway. These may include narrower drive lanes and dedicate greater portions of the right-of-way to the pedestrian zone.



Intersection Improvement

Key intersections should be enhanced to improve crossing conditions and build the Township's image while maintaining traffic flow. A key intersection is Dixie Highway and Frembes Road. Working to make this intersection more accessible and welcoming involves working with the Michigan Department of Transportation to reimagine and improve the pedestrian experience. Potential improvements may include high-visibility crosswalks, enhanced landscaping, and new lighting fixtures. Redevelopment of the two corner lots at this intersection's southeast and southwest corner into mid-rise mixed-use developments would elevate this intersection as an important gateway into the Drayton Plains Subarea.

Gateway

Key entry points present opportunities to create gateways to welcome residents and visitors into the Drayton Plains Subarea. The Drayton Plains Subarea has two potential sites for gateways. The first is at the intersection of Dixie Highway and Meinrad Drive, which is on the northwest side of the Drayton Plains Subarea. The second is at the intersection of Dixie Highway and Farner Avenue. Improvements should include corner landscaping, a landscaped median, a north-south pedestrian refuge island, and widened sidewalks with a landscaped buffer. Redevelopment of the specific opportunity sites near the proposed gateways should take priority as they will aid in giving a lasting impression to people traveling in and out of the Drayton Plains Subarea.

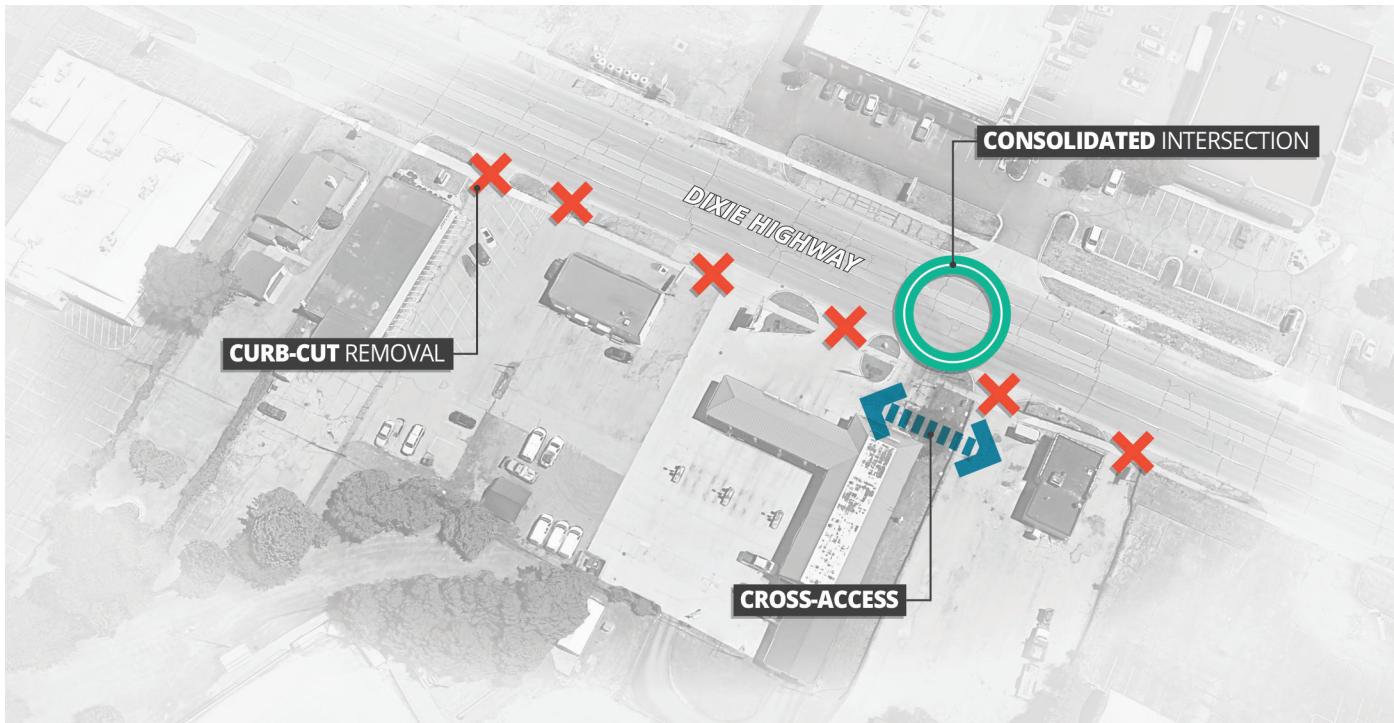


Wayfinding

Wayfinding can play a major part in strengthening sense of place and directing residents and visitors to key destinations within the community. Important destinations could include Shell Park, Loon Lake, local businesses, public gathering spaces, and trail connections. Wayfinding is particularly important in the Drayton Plains Subarea and should include uniform signage that is easy to use and visually appealing. Wayfinding can be intertwined with gateway improvements as they both lead to an increased sense of place and identity for the Drayton Plains Subarea.

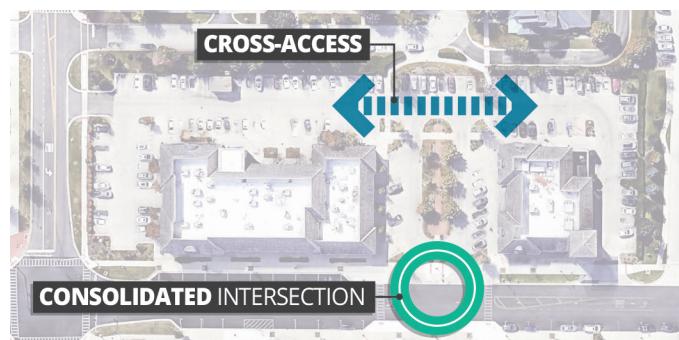
Widened Sidewalk with Landscaped Buffer

Widening the existing sidewalks and adding a landscaped parkway buffer with street trees can be an effective strategy for improving pedestrian safety and comfort in the Drayton Plains Subarea. Most of the sidewalks along Dixie Highway have some sort of landscape buffer, but buffers are narrow and vertical landscaping elements to help provide a visual barrier to vehicles are mostly absent. Increasing sidewalk width should be prioritized to increase the sense of safety for pedestrians. Looking at the sidewalk infrastructure along Sashabaw Road gives good context to what improvements should look like. Additionally, gaps in the sidewalk network should be filled.



Curb Cut/Consolidation

To improve corridor circulation and access, potential traffic conflict points and disruptions in sidewalks should be reduced by either removing or consolidating excess curb cuts. Excess curb cuts decrease the walkability of an area by creating more potential points of conflict between cars, bikes, and pedestrians. The ability to move from business to business as well as general mobility along the sidewalk is affected when cars are able to cross over sidewalks. This may be completed during roadway improvements or through the site plan approval process for future redevelopment. Any improvements to Dixie Highway involves working with the Michigan Department of Transportation(MDOT) to reimagine and improve the pedestrian experience.

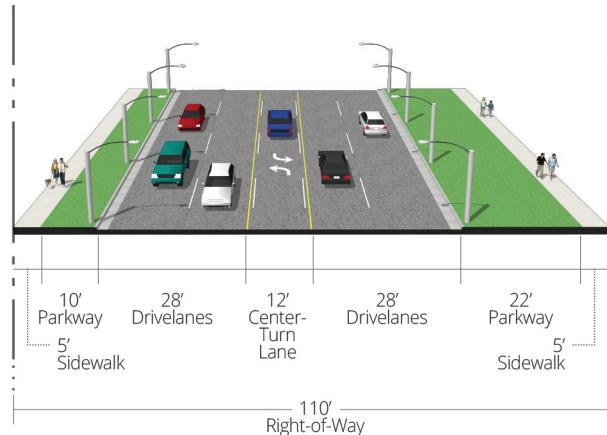




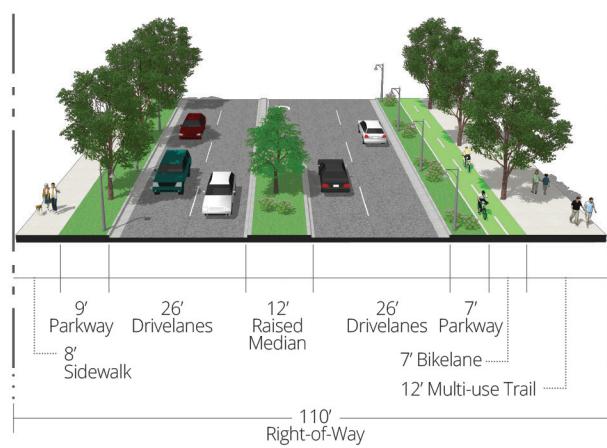
Roadway Reconfiguration

Dixie Highway is predominately auto-oriented by design. Traffic speed is fast, and some segments of sidewalks are located close to the roadway, creating an uncomfortable walking and biking experience. Adding streetscape elements, such as a pedestrian refuge island, medians with landscaping, and mid-block crossings, would improve the roadway's feel and function for pedestrians and make the environment more attractive to potential commercial tenants and residents. Additionally, adding an off-street multi-use path on either side of the roadway could attract walkers and bikers to the Drayton Plains Subarea who would have otherwise driven. The Corridor should be reconfigured to realize its potential as a multi-modal corridor.

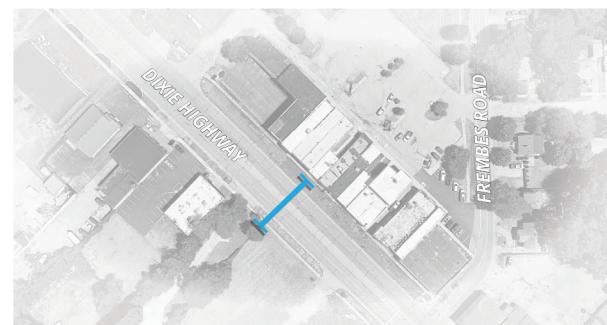
Dixie Highway
Existing Configuration



Dixie Highway
Potential Configuration

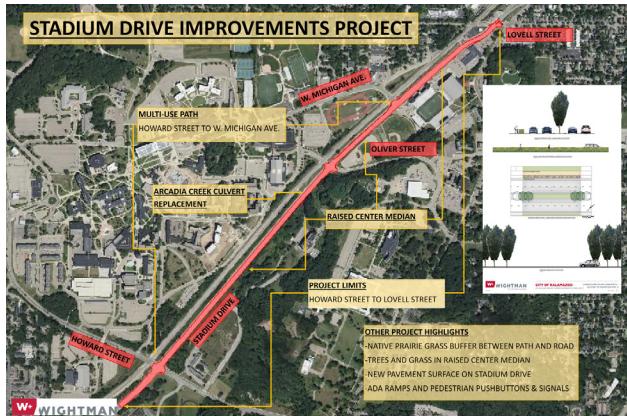


Dixie Highway
Cross-Section Location



CASE STUDY: STADIUM DRIVE IMPROVEMENTS/RECONSTRUCTION, KALAMAZOO, MI

The City of Kalamazoo, MI has a concentration of one-way streets within and around its Downtown area creating an auto-oriented environment. In 2019, the City led an effort to redesign its one-way streets to promote an environment that would be accessible to all modes of transportation. The City used its Complete Streets Policy and its Street Design Manual as official guides in making improvements to these roadways. One of them is Stadium Drive, which was reconfigured into a two-way street with several key improvements. One of them is a landscaped median with native grasses and trees. The City retrofitted all of the pedestrian-crossing signals to be fully ADA-compliant. It also installed an off-street shared-use path on the north side of the street which connects two existing trails. The shared-use path provided pedestrians and bicyclists a safe connection between Downtown and Western Michigan University and Kalamazoo College.



Trail Connection

The Township should leverage opportunities to create a trail connection between the Drayton Plains Subarea and the Clinton River Riverwalk to the southwest. Recent improvements to the Riverwalk enhance accessibility and provide more space for recreational activities. Including a trail connection with additional wayfinding will allow visitors to the Drayton Plains Subarea to take advantage of an amenity that they may not have visited otherwise. The trail connection can be established along Frembes Road, which already has an at-grade crossing with the existing railroad, and traverses through the Riverview subdivision to the south. Doing so will require the Township to obtain an easement from the Riverview subdivision. The trail would then head eastward and make connections along the Clinton River. The intention is to establish a bike connection between Shell Park and the existing Nature Center at Drayton Plains to give bikers and hikers access to the Nature Center from the largest park in the subarea. Improved interconnectivity of the subarea and the Township improves the community's quality of life as it can utilize safe, connected trail networks to travel throughout the area.



Site Screening & Buffering

Screening can help elevate the character of corridors and mitigate impacts on neighboring lower-activity uses. Screening includes the use of quality, opaque fencing, walls, and/or landscaping to screen unattractive uses like parking, loading bays, storage, or trash disposal areas from the public right-of-way and adjacent uses. Sites specifically along Dixie Highway should be targeted for screening. Additionally, screening should be used to separate commercial and services uses from the residential uses. Providing a buffer can help demarcate where one land use stops and another one starts.

Redevelopment Opportunity Site

Several sites are either vacant, experiencing disinvestment, or have incompatible development, presenting opportunities for future redevelopment. Future redevelopment should reflect the Township's vision for the Drayton Plains Subarea and feature desirable land use and built form. Most of these sites have large frontages on Dixie Highway. With a focused vision, the redevelopment of these sites will significantly improve the streetscape, walkability, and overall feel of the Drayton Plains Subarea. As redevelopment occurs, density should be focused along Dixie Highway and tapered down as development approaches neighborhood edges.

Lakefront Amenity Area

The vacant site across Dixie Highway from Drayton Station and the property at 4080 Dixie Highway can be a lakefront space that complements the gateway to the Drayton Plains Subarea. As the only point within the Drayton Plains Subarea with lakefront access, these sites are critical to bringing people into the Drayton Plains Subarea as well as connecting the Drayton Plains Subarea to Loon Lake. Safe pedestrian and bicycle access to this site will also be important.

Shell Park

A significant asset to the Drayton Plains Subarea is Shell Park. Sitting on the western side of the subarea, this park currently has multiple baseball/softball fields. The park's accessibility is limited by the train tracks to the south and the commercial businesses to the north and east. Points of entry are found via a dirt road off of Frembes Road and a shared access driveway adjacent to 4355 Dixie Highway. Shell Park has the potential to be transformed into a more complete, multi-use park. Improvements to the park should include a central gathering space, pavilions, and an outdoor amphitheater. The playing fields should be reduced to one baseball and one softball field. Other amenities could be considered including a space for food trucks which could be near the entrance off Dixie Highway.

Implementation and Funding

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development defines areas in communities that are eligible for funding from the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program based on the share of low- and moderate-income residents. Eligibility for CDBG funding is determined at the block group level.

Much of the Drayton Plains subarea is within a block group that is eligible for CDBG funding as of 2023, which means that projects within the eligible block group could seek various forms of funding from the CDBG program. One such opportunity is the Section 108 Loan Guarantee Program, which provides communities with low-cost, long-term financing for economic and community development projects. Section 108 funds can be used for a variety of economic development, housing, public facilities, infrastructure, and other physical development projects. The Township should consider leveraging Section 108 financing and other CDBG-related financing opportunities to assist in development and redevelopment projects in the Drayton Plains Subarea.

Development Concepts

As part of the Master Plan process, Township staff created a series of conceptual plan illustrations for redevelopment along Dixie Highway in the Drayton Plains subarea. The illustration below captures the entire subarea looking east along Dixie Highway. The illustration shows 2-3 story mixed-use development fronting directly on Dixie Highway, a park, and townhomes to the east.



The illustration below shows Dixie Highway from the south looking north. The illustration on the bottom is looking from the north, facing southwest. Both the renderings show mixed-use and townhouse development fronting directly on Dixie Highway with parking located to the rear. The bottom illustration also shows how underutilized parcels and vacated right-of-way could be used to establish a plaza space and public amenity area.



The top illustration shows how Dixie Highway could be reconfigured to include a landscaped median and pedestrian friendly streetscape. The second illustration shows outdoor seating located along a shared parking lot.



The illustration below shows a public gathering space which should be provided along Dixie Highway as a complement to new development.



CHAPTER 9

TRANSPORTATION

The efficient movement of goods and people through the Township depends on an integrated system of transportation services and infrastructure. A well functioning transportation system is integral to a community's local economy. It should provide dependable routes to work and efficient routes for delivery. In Waterford Township, the community's transportation system depends on coordination with several local and regional agencies including the Road Commission for Oakland County and the Michigan Department of Transportation, which have jurisdiction over local transportation assets. This chapter describes the Township's existing transportation system and identifies improvements needed to enhance the system in keeping with residents' and stakeholders' priorities.

ROAD NETWORK

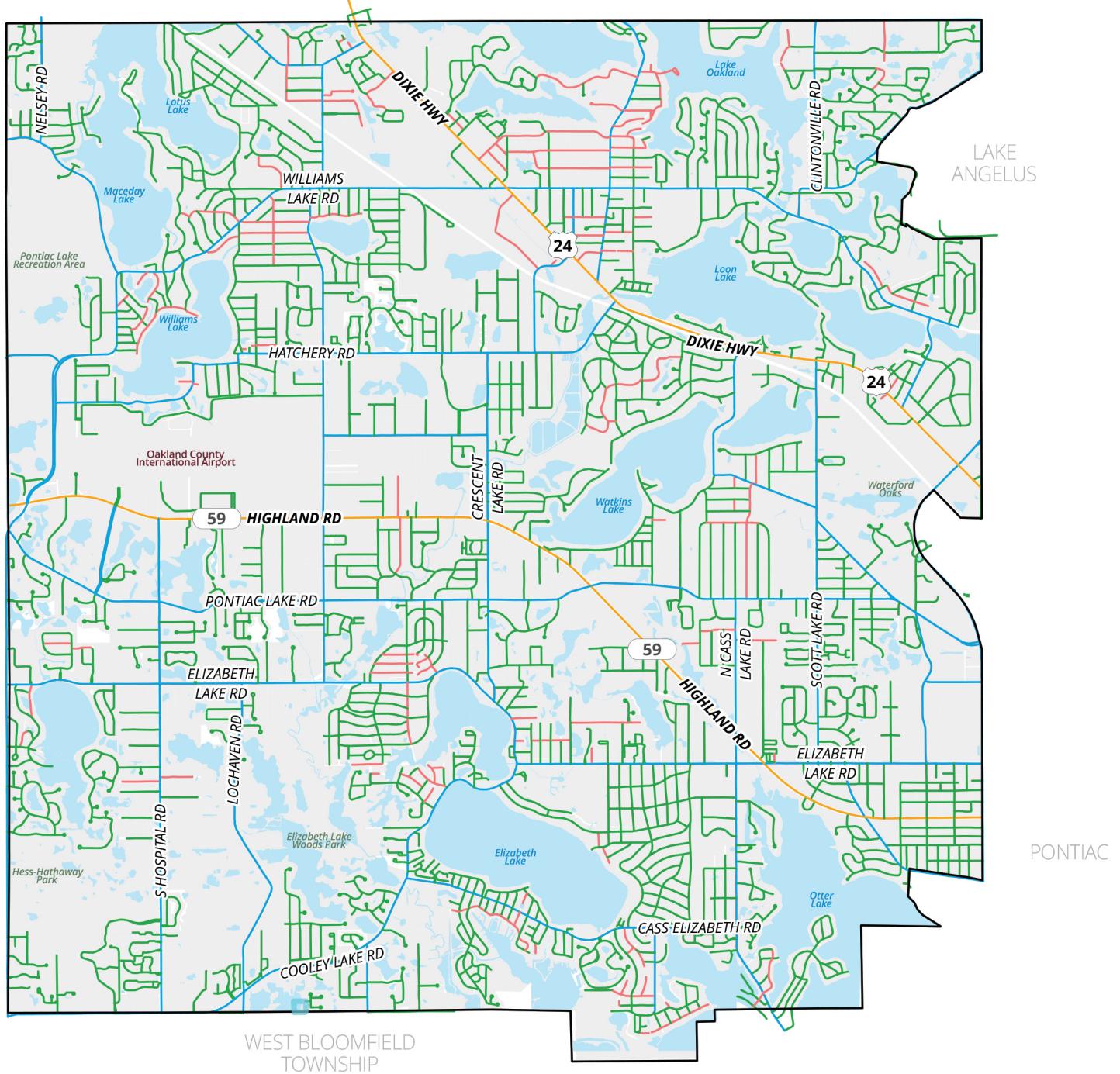
As is the case in much of Southeast Michigan, automobile transportation is the primary mode of travel in the Township. The operation and maintenance of all public roads in Waterford Township is shared between the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC). Maintaining coordination with each agency and working together to ensure all road reconstruction projects have been properly reviewed for potential infrastructure improvements is critical.

MDOT oversees approximately 15 miles of state highways in Waterford Township – Dixie Highway, M-59, and Telegraph Road – all of which are five-lane routes that cross the Township as shown on the road classification map. However, the numerous access drives to commercial properties from these highways, coupled with the use of the left-turn lane for acceleration, elevates the risk of car accidents. MDOT has begun implementing an active access management and traffic calming program along M-59, and continuing the program along other stretches of highway would mitigate these risks.

RCOC has jurisdiction over 278.28 miles of the Township's public roads, which includes 62.09 miles of primary roads and 184.19 miles of local subdivision roads. The RCOC employs an Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) called FastTrac to efficiently route vehicle traffic through the Township and surrounding areas using a responsive traffic signal system that monitors and adjusts timing based on the amount of traffic traveling through each intersection. Any proposed modifications or enhancements to roads under RCOC jurisdiction would require RCOC review and any work proposed within the right-of-way will require a permit.

Additionally, 46 miles of private roads exist in the Township and are maintained by property owners abutting these roads. Most arterials and public roads within developments are paved, although a few unpaved sections of road remain.

INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP



ROAD CLASSIFICATIONS

- MAIN
- PRIMARY
- SECONDARY
- SPLIT

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles



Road Conditions

During community outreach, residents reported that deteriorating road conditions continued to present an issue throughout the Township and continued cooperation with MDOT and RCOC should be pursued to improve road conditions. Each of the transportation agencies has several planned roadway improvement projects within the Township.

In 2023, RCOC rehabilitated W Walton Road, east of Clintonville Road, and has planned for the replacement of a bridge on Pontiac Lake Road, east of Airport Road, as well as the replacement of culverts in other locations throughout the Township. As of 2023, MDOT is planning the resurfacing of several segments of M-59, from Elizabeth Lake Road to Telegraph Road, Pontiac Lake Road to Airport Road, and Airport Road to Elizabeth Lake Road. RCOC's planned improvements are released on an annual basis. The Township should seek to partner with RCOC and MDOT to maintain an annual review process for evaluating the capital needs of roads throughout the Township to ensure that necessary improvements are integrated into each agencies' plans.



Cross Access

Throughout the Township, adjacent properties are often not connected with one another in a way that facilitates navigation between them. Individuals seeking to navigate between properties on the south side of M-59 between Irwin Drive and Dundee Drive would have to turn back out onto M-59 to access the adjacent lot. Though the Township's Zoning Ordinance currently requires cross-access easements between adjacent lots, the provisions could be strengthened to encourage orderly access at slow speeds. Many communities specify through their zoning that cross-access infrastructure and speed reduction measures, such as chicanes and curb extensions, be employed to increase connectivity and reduce speeds. Often, these regulations occur when redevelopment or new development occurs and typically specifies minimum dimensions that new infrastructure should meet. The Township should consider strengthening its requirements to require cross-access infrastructure for pedestrians and motorists.



Streetscaping Improvements

During community outreach, residents emphasized that streetscaping projects are needed to enhance the aesthetic appeal of the Township's major corridors. The community suggested that boulevards with landscaping and raised medians should be pursued to enhance the streets as a place for residents and visitors to walk and spend time. The Township will need to continue to work with MDOT and RCOC to implement these streetscaping and traffic calming improvements over time.

Dixie Highway Roadway Improvements

A good example of a prominent location that could be enhanced by streetscaping improvements is Dixie Highway through the Drayton Plains subarea. The street design in this area is focused on vehicular travel, with limited attention paid to non-motorized transportation in the area. The highway features four vehicle travel lanes and one center turn lane throughout much of its extent. Sidewalks are present along much of the corridor, however, they are not wide enough to ensure pedestrian comfort and are not buffered from Dixie Highway by an adequate quantity of street trees. Adding pedestrian-friendly elements, including the improvements listed below, would enhance the street's feel and function and make the environment more attractive to potential commercial tenants and residents:

- Replace center turn lanes with raised medians with landscaping and vegetation
- Reduce the width of vehicle travel lanes
- Add pedestrian refuge islands and signalized mid-block crossings
- Off-street multi-use pathways
- Reduce the width of parkways and add pedestrian-scaled lighting and vegetation
- Provide street trees where possible
- Improve intersections with landscaping and visible crosswalks at prominent locations such as at Dixie Highway and Frembes Road

These improvements to the Dixie Highway streetscape will require extensive coordination with MDOT, as the State maintains the roadway. Refer to the Drayton Plains subarea plan on Page 57 for additional details and recommendations on the reconfiguration of Dixie Highway.

Dixie Highway Curb Cut Consolidation

In addition, the Township should improve access management by consolidating curb cuts throughout the Dixie Highway Corridor. The area currently contains an abundance of curbcuts to access individual properties. For example, much of the frontage on the south side of Dixie Highway between Sashabaw Road and Frembes Road is occupied with curb cuts. This impedes the walkability of the area by creating more points of conflict between motorized travelers and pedestrians using sidewalks along the roadway. The abundance of curb cuts can also impede safety for motorists by creating more potential conflicts between vehicles entering and exiting properties onto roadways. The Township should work with property owners and MDOT to reduce the number of curb cuts in the Dixie Highway area over time. The reduction in curb cuts should be pursued through the site plan approval process as redevelopment occurs and as roadway improvements are undertaken.

M-59 Roadway Improvements

M-59 currently features four vehicle travel lanes and one center turn lane as it travels through the Township. This automobile-oriented street inhibits any sense of place found in new commercial nodes such as the Waterfront Commercial site at Pontiac Lake, west of the intersection with Williams Lake Road. The Township should work with MDOT to implement improvements along M-59, which should include the following:

- Raised medians containing trees and landscaping
- Pedestrian refuge islands and signalized mid-block crossings
- Reconfiguration of sidewalk on the south side to add a parkway
- Parkways with landscaping and street trees between the sidewalk and street along M-59

These improvements will be particularly impactful at the western gateway adjoining White Lake Charter Township, as this location forms a key gateway to the community. Such improvements will contribute to the Township's efforts to beautify the area, enhance placemaking, and develop a Waterfront Commercial node along Pontiac Lake.

Consider Potential Road Connections

In Waterford, many subdivisions end before connecting with their neighbors and main roads often have few connecting roads between them. This forces more traffic onto fewer roads and reduces accessibility across the Township. New road connections could be needed to support future development. However, this may not always be possible due to sensitive wetlands throughout Waterford Township. That being said, several sites in the Township could intensify over time with new residential growth occurring on sites such as the Oakland Community College campus. The Township should work with RCOC and property owners to consider installing road connections between main thoroughfares and existing subdivisions to provide better service and connectivity while acknowledging the need to preserve wetlands where possible.

NONMOTORIZED TRANSPORTATION

Multimodal travel for pedestrians and bicyclists has been a topic of growing interest for residents in recent years. During the Master Plan process, members of the community emphasized the need to improve its multimodal assets.

Sidewalks

The Township boasts 199 miles of sidewalks and bike paths, but there are gaps that hinder nonmotorized transportation. As the Pathway System Condition map shows, many areas with sidewalk segments do not connect. This includes south of Dixie Highway and east of Hatchery Road, south of Highland Road and west of Airport Road, and along Crescent Lake Road. To help close some of the gaps, for the past three decades, the Township has been implementing a requirement that new sidewalks must be installed as part of all new development.

In 2017, the Township commissioned a sidewalk condition assessment to determine the state of the existing sidewalk and pathway system. The map shows that many existing sidewalks are only in a "fair condition" along major thoroughfares and are absent in many neighborhoods. Due to deficiencies in the current sidewalk system, the Township is focusing more on maintaining and improving the existing nonmotorized infrastructure rather than constructing additional sidewalks or bike paths.

Continue to Consider a Sidewalk Millage

In most communities, a sidewalk millage is implemented to maintain and improve the sidewalk system. Waterford Township has not had a sidewalk millage since 1986. The current funding in place for the township to maintain the sidewalk network is not sufficient to keep the network in its existing condition, much less to improve upon it. To improve the existing sidewalk and pathway network, the Township should consider putting a dedicated sidewalk millage on the ballot for residents to vote on.

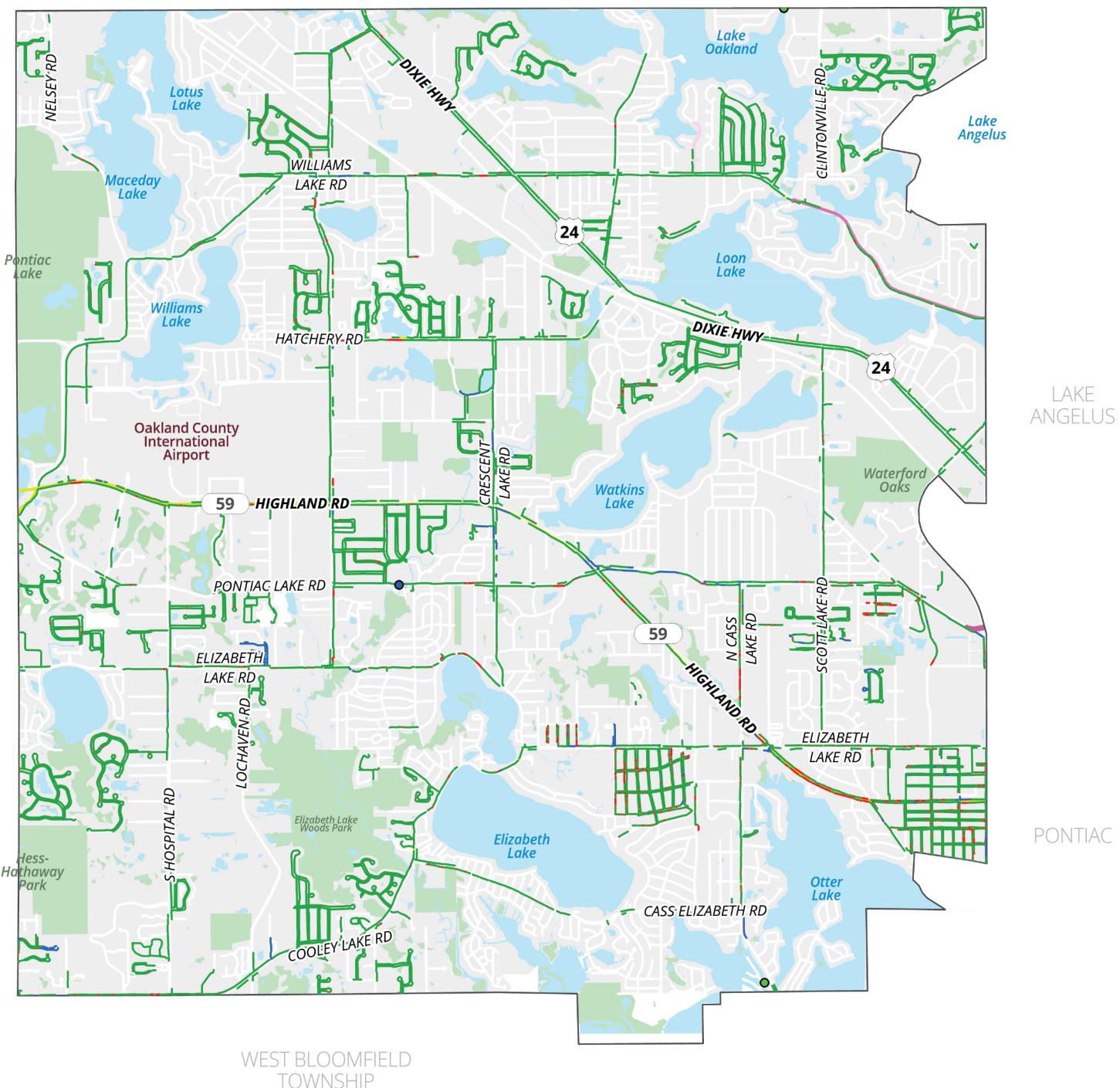
Implement New Sidewalk Improvements

As the Township continues to pursue funding sources to improve the existing sidewalk system, it should continue to prioritize improvements to the network in key locations as described in this section. Expanding the network for pedestrian travel will form connections between key locations and points of interest in the community.

Connect Neighborhoods with Institutional and Recreational Uses

Throughout the Township, major institutional facilities are not connected with the surrounding neighborhoods or nearby recreational amenities. For instance, connections are missing in the neighborhood surrounding Huntoon Lake near Waterford Kettering High School, which adjoins many possible sites for future nonmotorized improvements such as along Williams Lake Road. In addition, the neighborhood around Knudsen Elementary School, which adjoins potential nonmotorized trails along Crescent Road and the Clinton River, does not have any nonmotorized trails. The Township should consider adding sidewalk connections in these areas to promote connection between community assets.

CLARKSTON



PATHWAY SYSTEM CONDITION

PASER Study Rating

- 1; 2; 3; 4
- 5; 6; 7
- 8; 9
- No Value

0 0.28 0.55 1.1 Miles



Drayton Plains Subarea Sidewalk Connections

The Township should create trail connections, specifically between primary pedestrian centers like the Drayton Plains Subarea and the Waterford Riverwalk trail to the southwest and other points of interest and destinations. The riverwalk has seen significant improvements and includes a trail connection with additional wayfinding that will allow visitors greater access to the Drayton Plains Subarea. A trail connection along Frembes Road, with connections along the Clinton River, would provide a non-motorized connection between Shell Park and the existing Nature Center at Drayton Plains, allowing bikers and hikers access to the Nature Center from the park.

Develop a Nonmotorized Maintenance Plan

As of 2023, the Township does not have a master non-motorized transportation plan that proposes and prioritizes improvements to the system over time. The Township should seek to develop a master nonmotorized transportation plan to catalogue these types of improvements over time. Developing and adopting this type of plan will be a key step to prioritize different improvements to the nonmotorized system and will allow the Township to strategically apply for external funding for the projects identified in the plan.

RAILROAD

The Canadian National Railway intersects major arterial roads at six points within the Township, but there are no immediate plans to separate road and railroad crossings at these intersections. The six points are along Scott Lake Road, Watkins Lake Road, Hatchery Road, Frembes Road, Williams Lake Road, and Airport Road. The 31,000 feet of track operated by Canadian National Railroad line is devoted to freight traffic, and is anticipated to continue for the foreseeable future.

The railroad passes through most of the industrially zoned properties within the Township. Potential exists for the railroad to be better utilized as a benefit to industrial users.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Waterford Township currently lacks a mass transit system since it opted out of the SMART regional bus system in the mid-1990s, but is currently working to accommodate more riders timers, and day for both WOTA and SMART. The recent passing of the Oakland County transit millage will bring SMART stops on Highland Road in the near future. Van transport is available for senior citizens and disabled residents through the Western Oakland Transportation Authority.



OAKLAND COUNTY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

The Oakland County International Airport (OCIA), a prominent general aviation airport, ranks as Michigan's second busiest airport with 142,535 takeoffs and landings annually (Oakland County Airports, 2022 data). The OCIA supports international business travel through its U.S. Customs office and contributes over \$1 billion to the County's economy each year. Nevertheless, there are no ongoing proposal to introduce scheduled commercial passenger service at OCIA. The airport is open 24 hours a day and offers:

- Paved runways and taxiways, effective lighting and taxiway identification, and excellent approaches to its 6520-foot instrument runway
- Charter contract passenger service
- Air freight operations
- Fuel services and maintenance, as well as the entire range of aircraft services are available from several Fixed Base Operators (FBO)
- New and used aircraft sales operations and flight training schools offer resources for current and future pilots in Oakland County
- A Federal Aviation Administration-staffed control tower provides complete air traffic control services including Tower Advisory Radar
- User-fee U.S. Customs Service is available 7:00 am to 8:00 pm, Monday through Friday, and "on call" at all other times. This service improves convenience and saves time for international travelers by eliminating the need for an additional stop to clear customs.
- Restaurant and banquet facilities, car rental and many other services are within easy reach of the comfortable terminal lobby and waiting areas.

In recent years, the OCIA facility accommodated events, conventions, entertainment, and other temporary uses. The Township should partner with the County airport to encourage similar temporary uses of the site and consider more permanent cohesive commercial uses, such as an airport restaurant or local art exhibit, that may bridge this unique amenity with the rest of the Township.



RECOMMENDATIONS

During community outreach, members of the community stressed that continued maintenance of the Township's roads is a priority and the implementation of new sidewalks and bicycle lanes should form a cohesive nonmotorized transportation network. To achieve this the Township should take the following actions:

- Cooperate with MDOT as it continues to implement its active access management and traffic calming program along M-59.
- Coordinate with MDOT and RCOC on future road improvements and resurfacing including the resurfacing of M-59.
- Work with RCOC and MDOT to develop and maintain an annual review process to evaluate the capital needs for roads within the Township.
- Work with RCOC to assess the feasibility of filling gaps in the sidewalk network and install streetscaping improvements along M-59 as planned improvements are made to the roadway, with priority given to the area adjacent to Pontiac Lake.
- Encourage the consolidation and/or removal of curb cuts in the Drayton Plains subarea to improve the pedestrian environment and reduce traffic conflicts.
- Undertake streetscape improvements along Dixie Highway as shown in the Drayton Plains Subarea chapter including the addition of raised medians, parkways, street trees, and multi-use trails to enhance the area's sense of place, promote pedestrian access, and calm traffic speeds.
- Work with RCOC and property owners to consider installing a road connection between thoroughfares to serve new development in the area.
- Continue to engage residents about a potential sidewalk millage to improve the condition of the Township's sidewalks and fill gaps in the network over time.
- Consider strengthening the cross-access provisions in the Zoning Ordinance to require the construction of cross-access infrastructure with traffic calming measures when development or redevelopment occurs and specify minimum dimensions.
- Consider prioritizing sidewalk connections in neighborhoods that connect between schools, recreational amenities, and other assets as new sidewalks are added over time.
- Establish a nonmotorized transportation plan to further prioritize projects to maintain and enhance the Township's nonmotorized assets.
- Create trail connections between areas of high pedestrian activity and nearby recreation areas, such as between the Drayton Plains Subarea and the Waterford Riverwalk to the southeast.
- Create a trail connection along Frembes Road, with connections along the Clinton River to provide a connection between Shell Park and the Nature Center at Drayton Plains.
- Coordinate with OCIA to encourage innovative temporary uses of the airport site including events, conventions, and entertainment.

CHAPTER 10

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

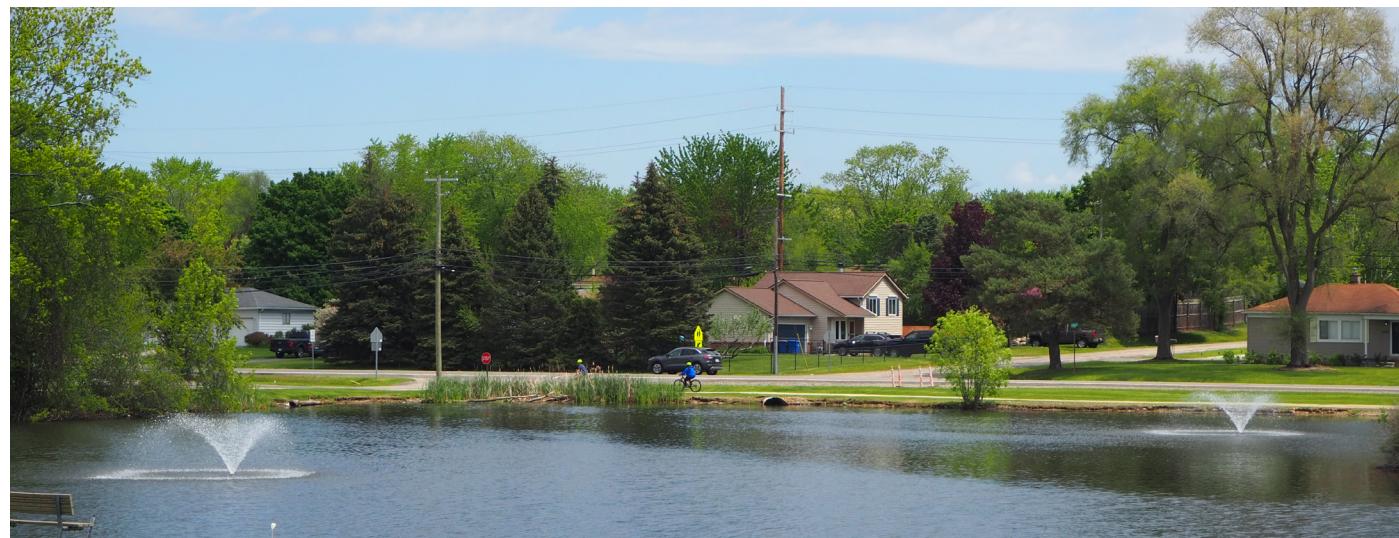
Community facilities encompass a range of structures, locations, and services vital for governing and supporting residents. Water and sewer services are vital amenities needed to support the development of residential and nonresidential uses. Meanwhile other services like police, fire, water and sewer, libraries, electronic systems, parks and recreation, and public services are more recognizable and apparent to the public. This Chapter summarizes the Township's community facilities and services, explains recent efforts to improve the Township's services, and explains whether any additional improvements are needed.

WATER, SEWER, AND STORMWATER

The Department of Public Works (DPW) handles water and sewer services through its Water and Sewer Division. Using advanced technology, the DPW provides high-quality potable water for residential, commercial, and industrial uses, including fire protection to nearly every area within the Township.

The Township's water system is comprised of 355 miles of water main, 19 wells, 10 water treatment plants, 3 storage tanks and 9 emergency connections to adjacent water systems.

The DPW also provides for the safe and efficient collection and transport of all wastewater from properties connected to the sewer system through approximately 366 miles of sanitary sewer lines and 63 pumping stations.



Water Asset Management Plan

In 2020, the Township commissioned a Water Asset Management Plan to investigate the existing water system and begin the development of a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

Several projects identified in the preliminary draft CIP include improvements to the water treatment facilities, the storage tanks, pump and well maintenance, and water main replacement projects throughout the Township. The water main replacement projects are designed to tackle two issues: older water mains susceptible to breaks and undersized water mains. In 2020, the Township began implementation of the CIP and will continue to utilize the plan, as well as additional information gathered, to improve and update the water system.

Wastewater Asset Management Plan

In 2019, the Township commissioned a Wastewater Asset Management Plan (WWAMP) under the State of Michigan's Stormwater, Asset Management, and Wastewater (SAW) Grant program. The WWAMP assessed the existing sanitary sewer system to determine areas in need of improvement and created a CIP to maintain and improve the wastewater system.

Business Risk Exposure (BRE) Scores

The criticality of wastewater assets was examined regarding their overall functional importance in supplying water to the Township and the impacts to customers if an asset failed. To determine the criticality of system assets, a business risk exposure (BRE) score was calculated. The consequence of failure total score and probability of failure total score were multiplied to calculate a BRE score for each asset.

Wastewater Improvements

A recommended CIP strategy was developed to outline operations and maintenance, repairs, replacement, and rehabilitation of sanitary sewer main, manholes and sanitary pump stations for the 20-year planning period. The Township has begun enacting the CIP and will continue applying the plan to ensure the safe and efficient operation of the wastewater system.

The DPW has taken full advantage of advanced technology, including sophisticated water- and sewer-modeling systems and forecasting tools to anticipate, plan, and fund capital water and sewer infrastructure improvements. Using these tools and their consultant engineers, the DPW has identified several capital improvement projects to improve water and sewer service in critical areas and in conjunction with other Township planned improvements.

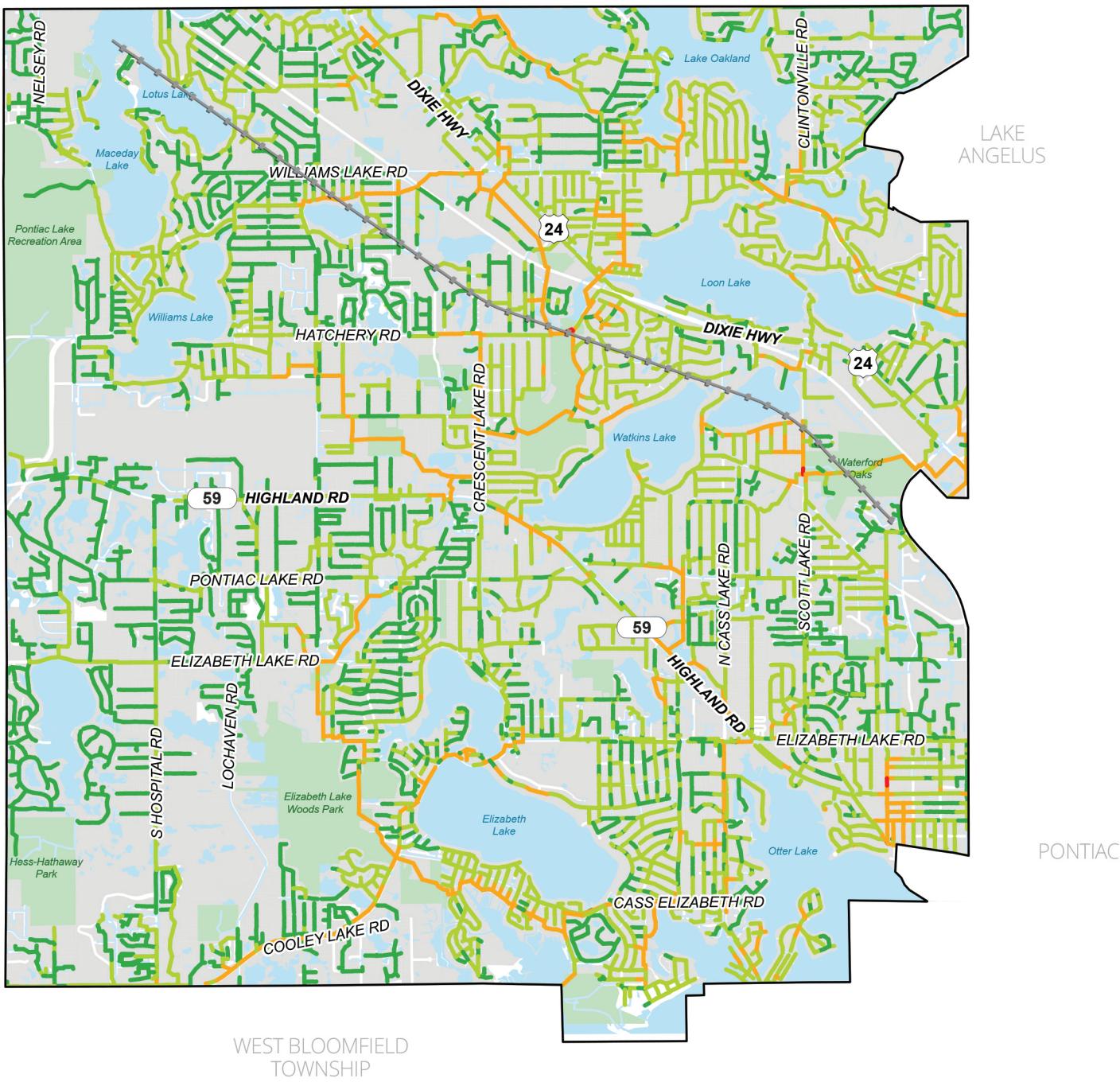
Additional Water/Sewer Improvements

In addition, the Township should investigate the need for several improvements to its water and wastewater system based on the land use recommendations of this plan. The future land use plan in Chapter 4 recommends several significant increases in density or changes in use from existing patterns. For example, the plan recommends an increase in residential development in the Drayton Plains subarea, along Cooley Road, and along Dixie Highway north of Williams Lake Road. To accommodate these recommended changes, the Township may need to consider improvements to its water and sewer infrastructure to better serve the development. The Township should consider infrastructure improvements in the following areas:

- **Drayton Plains Subarea:** The Township should investigate the need for water system improvements to serve the proposed mix of commercial and residential development.
- **Cooley Lake Road:** The Township should investigate the need for upgrades to its water infrastructure along Cooley Lake Road east of Williams Lake Road to serve the proposed mix of residential and commercial development. Water system improvements may be needed to the Oakland Community College site for the property to accommodate residential uses in the future.
- **Dixie Highway North of Williams Lake Road:** The Township should investigate the need for updates to its sewer system along Dixie Highway north of Williams Lake Road to accommodate the proposed new mixed-use development.

Stormwater Management

The stormwater management in Waterford Township is primarily the responsibility of the Oakland County Water Resources Commissioner's Office (OCWRC). The Township is responsible for managing the stormwater that drains from all Township owned properties, which includes the inlets to the pond on the Civic Center property, and all runoff from facilities and parking lots around the Township. All remaining drainage areas along Township streets are the responsibility of the OCWRC. The DPW regularly works with the OCWRC to ensure stormwater is being managed properly to reduce the risk of flooding and damage to residences and businesses. Additionally, coordination is performed to ensure stormwater runoff is not polluting the many lakes and rivers in the Township.



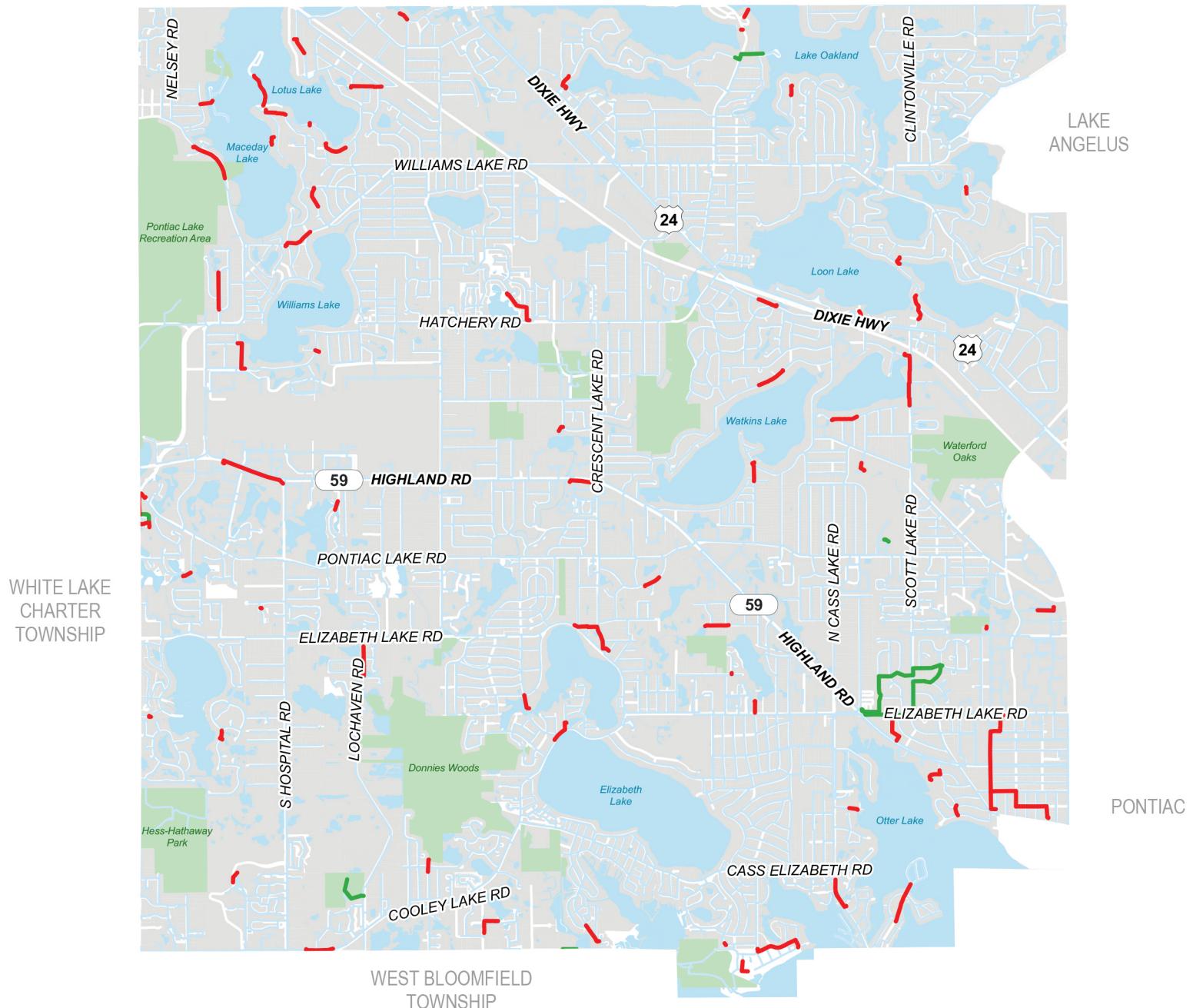
GRAVITY SEWER MAIN SCORES

- Low Risk
- Medium Risk
- High Risk
- Critical/Intolerable Risk

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles



INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP



PRESSURE SEWER MAIN BRE SCORES

Criticality

- Low Risk
- Medium Risk
- High Risk
- Critical/Intolerable Risk

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles



TOWNSHIP HALL

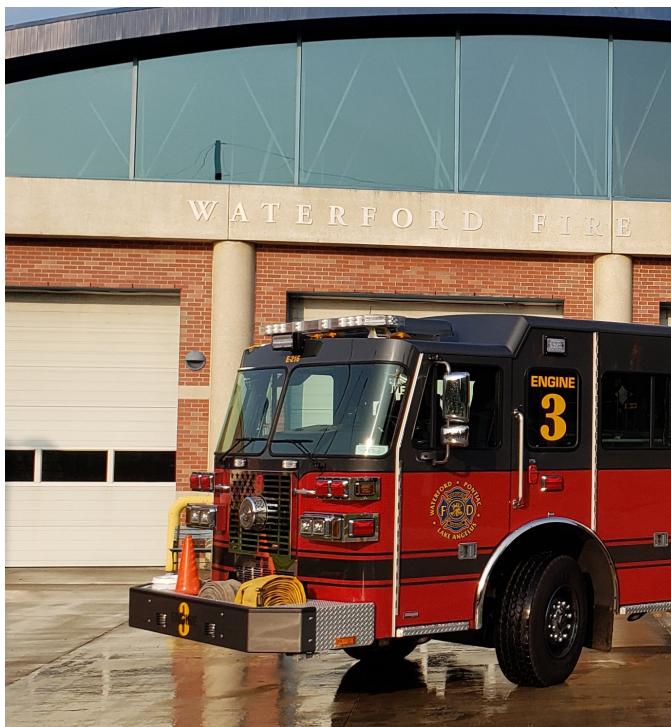
Waterford Township Hall, constructed in 1979, serves as the central hub of the Civic Center and accommodates elected officials' offices, as well as various departments including Assessing, Fiscal, Human Resources, Information Systems, Development Services, Parks and Recreation, and the Treasurers Office. This facility also contains an auditorium and conference rooms for official meetings.



POLICE

Police protection is managed by the Township Police Department, which is stationed next to Township Hall in a building built in 2001. In addition to patrol duties, Waterford police officers manage several specialized units including a Special Response Team, Motor Unit, Honor Guard, and K9 Unit. The Police Department handles around 48,000 calls per year. Since the Police Department building is over 20 years old, several maintenance improvements are scheduled including interior and exterior repairs, improvements, and several safety enhancements.





FIRE

Fire protection and medical services are offered by the Waterford Regional Fire Department through a command structure led by the Fire Chief and Deputy Chief. Firefighters are distributed across five fire stations in the Township and four additional fire stations in the City of Pontiac. The stations are strategically positioned for quick response times, which currently average around four minutes. When Waterford assumed the four additional fire stations from the City of Pontiac in 2012, it became the largest fire department in Oakland County. In total, the fire department receives around 14,000 service calls each year, which includes around 10,000 medical emergencies.

The Fire Department Headquarters and Fire Station 1 are housed adjacent to the Civic Center campus in a building constructed in 2000. Of the four other fire station buildings in the Township, Fire Station 2 is over 70 years old, Fire Station 3 is 35 years old, Fire Station 4 is 49 years old, and Fire Station 5 is 44 years old. The four fire stations located in the City of Pontiac, Fire Stations 6, 7, 8, and 9, are 60, 62, 46, and 56 years old respectively. With several of the fire stations becoming old or outdated, many new renovations and upgrades are planned over the next 20 years. Such improvements include an a remodel of Fire Station 4, construction of a new Fire Station 2, and HVAC improvements and building repairs at each station. In addition, several new vehicles and pieces of equipment are scheduled to be purchased by the Fire Department to be able to continue providing the high level of service and safety currently offered.



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

The DPW administers, through its Facilities and Operations (F&O) Division, the operations and maintenance services for all Township buildings and grounds, Township vehicles, bike paths, and the five Township-run cemeteries. The F&O division developed a 20-year CIP to plan and budget for facilities improvements in each department of the Township. Scheduled improvements include roof replacement, new HVAC equipment, building exterior restoration, and generators at several different facilities. Along with the facilities improvements, the CIP includes new Township vehicles and scheduled maintenance on existing DPW equipment. All DPW services are provided by the 58 full time DPW employees that are housed in the administrative building built in 2001.

Departmental Operations

Waterford Township has actively invested in the development and implementation of advanced technology systems across multiple departments. The Township utilizes a Township-wide computer network and geographic information system (GIS) for use in on-going maintenance and improvements to their facilities and infrastructure. It also maintains an active Township website to provide citizens access to information about, and communication with, their local government.



PARKS AND RECREATION

The Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for the maintenance of 16 parks in Waterford. The department strives to enhance the quality of life of residents and non-residents alike, through the acquisition, protection, and conservation of natural resources and the management of recreational amenities. To provide the high quality parks the Township is known for, continued investment in the facilities and grounds is required. The department currently has several improvements scheduled at each location, including building improvements at the Recreation Center, Nature Center, Lions Park, Shell Park and Herrington Park and play structure improvements at Hess-Hathaway Park, Lions Park, Shell Park and Optimist Park. For additional detail on parks and recreation, please refer to the Parks and Recreation Chapter.

TOWNSHIP LIBRARY

The Waterford Township Library building was originally built in 1964 and was substantially expanded and renovated in 1995. Voters approved a renewal of the Library millage in August 2022, which has been in place since 1992. The Library services are that of collecting, locating, and disseminating information, guiding reading, and stimulating conversation. The Library participates in local literacy programs and provides materials in various formats for members unable to utilize the traditional printed word. The Library offers a delivery service to residents unable to visit the building. As residential development continues to occur in the community's major corridors and in the southwest, the Township should continue to coordinate with the Library to ensure adequate facility capacity is provided to meet demand.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The Waterford School District is the primary educational system in the Township. The Pontiac School system shares a small section of the Township along its eastern border and the Clarkston School district serves a small section of the Township along its northern border.

The school system is made up of nine elementary schools, two middle schools, and three high schools. Additionally, there are five specialized schools and programs in the district to help serve the needs of residents from pre-kindergarten through age 26. There is an early childhood learning facility and a new one that will be completed in August 2024, a facility to address the district's special education needs, and a post-high school education program.

In 2023, all schools appear to be operating with enrollments near their maximum capacity. Based on these findings, it is not anticipated that site expansions or additions will be necessary to accommodate an increase in the student population. However, the School District continues to undertake a program of additions to existing school facilities to provide students with up-to-date technology and materials to enhance their learning experiences.

In addition to the public school system and charter schools, there are three private schools including an elementary school, a high school, Our Lady of the Lakes, and the Oakside Prep Academy that serves students from kindergarten through 12th grade.

Serving New Residential Growth

Though the existing school facilities are adequate to serve the current needs of households today, additional coordination may be needed as population numbers change in the future. New residential growth is proposed in several areas of the future land use plan in Chapter 4, including along Cooley Lake Road east of Williams Lake Road, in the Drayton Plains subarea, and along Elizabeth Lake Road east of Crescent Lake. The Township should continue to work with the school district to ensure that adequate facilities are provided to serve new residential growth, as it occurs, and should seek to accommodate and support future school expansions that the district identifies.

Oakland Community College Highland Lakes Campus

The Highland Lakes Campus of Oakland Community College (OCC) is located in the southwest section of the Township. This campus was one of the two original campuses for OCC when it opened back in 1965. However, it will be closing in 2025 due to declining enrollments within the college and costs associated with aging campus buildings. OCC will work closely with the Township to ensure the property continues to benefit the residents of Waterford Township into the future. The Township will need to coordinate with developers and Township residents to form a cohesive vision for the site's future and potential redevelopment concepts.

Waterford Senior Center

The Waterford Senior Center is located in the eastern section of the Waterford Township. It offers various services and activities for seniors, including recreational activities (art, quilting, wood carving, card games, Wii Bowling, line dancing), health and wellness programs (hearing screenings, fitness classes, Meals on Wheels), and support services (transportation, legal counseling, tax preparation, assistive equipment loans).



RECOMMENDATIONS

Maintaining robust services such as water, wastewater, and stormwater will be key to enabling the development envisioned in this plan. Further, outreach participants underscored the need for a new community center and to strengthen ties with Waterford Township schools. The Township should consider the following recommendations:

- Continue to implement water service projects proposed in the Township's CIP including improvements to water treatment facilities, storage tanks, and pursue water main replacements.
- Continue implementing strategies as recommended in the CIP to maintain the sanitary sewer system, including rehabilitation of sanitary sewer mains, manholes, and sanitary pump stations.
- Adopt a complete CIP for the entire Township.
- Investigate the need for water system upgrades in key areas where an increase in residential density is recommended by this plan.
- Investigate the need for sewer system upgrades in locations where an increase in density is proposed.
- Continue to coordinate with OCWRC to ensure that stormwater is properly managed on-site.
- Implement planned improvements to the Township police, fire, and other Township facilities as scheduled.
- Continue to coordinate with the Township police and fire departments to determine whether additional facility improvements are needed to support residential growth.
- Continue to monitor Township buildings, facilities, and equipment to identify necessary upgrades, replacements, renovations, and long-term maintenance projects, and undertake preventative maintenance. Incorporate these identified improvements into the F&O Division's 20-year CIP.
- Review the capacity of municipal buildings and facilities to meet community needs and identify necessary expansion or improvement projects to accommodate planned growth.
- Continue to coordinate growth and development with the Waterford Township School District to ensure adequate facilities to serve the community as new residential growth occurs.
- Consider installing pedestrian infrastructure in neighborhoods near Waterford Township School District facilities, including near Waterford Kettering High School and Knudsen Elementary School.
- Investigate funding sources including Safe Routes to School grants as a funding source to develop sidewalks and bikeways that serve the Township's public and private schools.

CHAPTER 11

IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the **Waterford Township Master Plan** is crucial to realizing diverse housing options with quality commercial nodes, bicycle and pedestrian networks, transit, park space, and natural areas over the next 20 years. This process will require the cooperation and dedicated effort of Township staff, public officials, partner agencies, developers, the local businesses community, property owners, and residents. This chapter outlines the tools and strategies needed to help drive the implementation process.

ACTIVE USE

The **Waterford Township Master Plan** is the official policy guide for land use, growth, and reinvestment as the Township undergoes future development and improvement. It is important that the Plan is used on a regular basis by Township staff, boards, and commissions when reviewing all proposals for new development and planning-related initiatives. This includes directing agencies and service providers to use the Plan as new facilities, infrastructure, and programming are considered for investment. The Township's Planning Commission and Zoning Board of Appeals should also ensure future regulatory actions or policy changes that impact development are in line with the Plan.

Understanding the Plan

To ensure Township staff, key stakeholders, department heads, and newly elected and appointed officials understand the purpose and benefits of the **Waterford Township Master Plan**, the Township should host plan orientations to introduce the Master Plan and its core concepts.

COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

Successful implementation of the **Waterford Township Master Plan** will require a collaborative effort between the Township and its numerous partner agencies and organizations. These include local and regional agencies, educational institutions, community groups and organizations, the local business community, and the private sector - all of which have a strong impact on Waterford Township's quality of life. The Township should take the lead in building partnerships and instigating collaboration when taking on projects recommended by the Plan. Establishing strong partnerships and maintaining open, clear communication will help ensure a more efficient implementation process. Partners in plan implementation include, but are not limited to:

- White Lake Township
- Independence Township
- City of Lake Angelus
- City of Pontiac
- West Bloomfield Township
- Waterford Township School District
- Oakland Community College
- Oakland Intermediate School District
- Pontiac Schools District
- Clarkston School District
- Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy
- Michigan Department of Natural Resources
- Michigan Department of Transportation
- Michigan State Housing Development Corporation
- Michigan Economic Development Authority
- Major Employers
- Private Property Owners and Developers
- Oakland County
- Oakland County International Airport
- Oakland County Parks and Recreation
- Road Commission for Oakland County
- Southeast Michigan Council of Governments
- Waterford Township Library



MEDC Redevelopment Ready Communities

The Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) is a key potential partner for plan implementation through its Redevelopment Ready Communities®(RRC) program. RRC is a voluntary technical assistance initiative that encourages communities throughout the state to build a strong foundation in planning, zoning, and economic development. Through the program, communities adhere to a set of best practices in planning and zoning to ensure they are ready for new development and reinvestment. The RRC best practices were developed through engagement with public and private entities. The best practices ensure that the community has a supported vision for its future, easily navigable regulations that support redevelopment, and streamlined procedures that create predictability in the development process. The six RRC best practices include the following topics:

- Plans and public engagement
- Zoning
- Development review
- Boards and commissions
- Economic development strategy
- Redevelopment ready sites®

Upon receiving RRC certification, the community gains access to a series of additional benefits including support from the Redevelopment Services Team, which supports development opportunities for priority sites through site packaging and marketing efforts. Waterford Township is actively engaged in the RRC process but has yet to achieve full certification as an RRC community. Following adoption of this plan. The Township should continue to work toward RRC certification through zoning, development review, and other best practices.

MAINTAIN PUBLIC COMMUNICATION

The **Waterford Township Master Plan** was built on a foundation of input, ideas, and feedback gathered from residents, business owners, and other key stakeholders during the planning process. Outreach is essential to educating the community about the relevance of planning and the Township's role in defining its future. Building on efforts completed through the planning process, the Township should work to convey the major recommendations and overall vision of the Plan to the entire community. This can be done through regular updates, coverage of major milestones and projects, and by providing further opportunities for residents to voice their opinions. In addition, the Township should provide, easy-to-understand and graphically attractive pamphlets that simplify and explain typical civic processes. This could include informational materials that provide guidance on applying for zoning, building, subdivision, home expansion, or other development-related permits and approvals.

ALIGN CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN WITH THE MASTER PLAN

It is important that the implementation of **Waterford Township Master Plan** is coordinated with the Township's financial resources and capital planning. This will help ensure future capital investments successfully address both short- and long-term objectives of the Plan and are strategically budgeted and prioritized. The Township's Capital Improvement Plans (CIPs) are implemented in three-year cycles, which accounts for projects spanning over multiple years due to different phases of design and construction. CIP projects include street, watermain, and non-motorized trail construction, as well as preventative maintenance of infrastructure.

The Township should review and integrate the **Waterford Township Master Plan** into the capital improvement planning process, including the Township's annual budgeting process and during updates to the CIP. This will help assess funding needs and plan for potential sources, ensuring completion of desired improvements in a prioritized manner over the life of the Plan.

REGULAR UPDATES

The Waterford Township Master Plan is not intended to be a static document. The plan should adjust and morph to the changing needs and trends facing the Township over time. It will require regularly updating the Plan to ensure it remains relevant to new issues and community interests. Although a proposal to update the Plan can be brought forth by petition at any time, the Township should regularly undertake a systematic review of the Plan at least every three to five years, in keeping with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act. Ideally, this review should coincide with the preparation of the Township's budget and Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), which was most recently updated in early 2023 and included projects to be carried out for the next seven years. Timing updates to the Master Plan with updates to the CIP recommendations or changes relating to capital improvements or other programs to be considered as part of the Township's commitments for the upcoming fiscal year. The Township should also consider reviewing the plan following the completion of major projects or after significant events that may directly impact the community. Further, throughout the year, the Township should maintain a list of possible amendments or issues to be considered for change, addition, or deletion from the Plan.

POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

The following is a description of potential funding mechanisms and sources currently available to the Township and its partners for Plan implementation. As the funding sources are subject to change over time, it is important to continue to research and monitor grants, funding agencies, and programs to identify new opportunities as they become available.

General Economic Development Funding Sources

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

The purpose of TIF funding is to incentivize and attract desired development within key commercial areas. TIF dollars can typically be used for infrastructure, streetscaping, public improvements, land assemblage, and offsetting the cost of development. It can also be used for brownfield redevelopment, water resource improvement, economic growth, and promoting residential growth through different State of Michigan TIF statutes. Michigan municipalities are granted the power by the State to create TIF districts and their respective authorities.

TIF utilizes future property tax revenues generated within a designated area or district, to pay for improvements and further incentivize continued reinvestment. As the Equalized Assessed Value (EAV) of properties within a TIF District increases, the incremental growth in property tax over the base year that the TIF was established, is reinvested into that area. The revenue generated may be used to pay for development projects in the districts or used to secure bond issues for large public expenses. Over the life of a TIF district, existing taxing bodies receive the same level of tax revenue as in the base year. The Township currently leverages TIFs to fund brownfield redevelopment.

Business Improvement District (BID)/Principal Shopping District (PSD)

As a result of Michigan Public Act 120 of 1961, municipalities in Michigan, including urban Townships that are in a County with a population of more than 750,000 residents, such as Waterford Township, can create BIDs or PSDs, which focus on the development or redevelopment of principal shopping and business districts. BIDs are authorized to collect revenues, levy special assessments, and issue bonds to fund the BID's/PSD's maintenance, security, and operations. A provision of the act allows property owners of parcels within the zone plan to form Business Improvement Zones (BIZs), which permit levying special assessments to fund projects and initiatives outlined in the zone plan for 10 years.

Downtown Development Authority (DDA)

Enacted by Michigan Public Act 57 of 2018, municipalities may establish DDAs to promote development with its downtown district. DDAs provide various funding options, including administering TIFs, that can be used to finance downtown public improvement and grants the authority the ability to levy a limited millage to address administrative costs. Other financing options include special assessments, revenue bonds, revenues from properties owned or leased by the DDA, public donations and grants, and contributions from the local government. Once created, a DDA is required to develop a plan and may create a TIF plan to submit to the local government for approval.

Waterford Township does not currently have a DDA organization, although the community has considered the idea for many years. The formation of a DDA was proposed in the Township's 2003 Master Plan as a measure to improve the physical appearance and character of the community's commercial areas. The Township should consider forming one in locations proposed for redevelopment including the Drayton Plains subarea along Dixie Highway south of Williams Lake Road. The formation of a DDA in this area could aid in redevelopment of properties, streetscaping, and other public improvements planned in the district.

Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA)

Established by Michigan Public Act 57 of 2018 like DDAs, CIAs are designed to help communities fund commercial corridor improvements outside their primary downtown or commercial area. Specifically, they allow TIFs to be used for commercial and economic growth within its district. Any Michigan municipalities, including Townships like Waterford, have the power to establish CIAs, and may appoint a director, create a TIF plan, levy special assessments, and issue revenue bonds. A CIA may contain multiple municipalities and more than one CIA is permitted within a municipality. The Township should evaluate the potential of forming a BID or a CIA to support redevelopment in key redevelopment locations outside the Drayton Plains subarea along Dixie Highway including Cooley Lake Road, N Telegraph Road, Elizabeth Lake Road, and Highland Road. The Township could explore partnerships with surrounding communities such as White Lake Charter Township, West Bloomfield Township, and the City of Pontiac to implement its redevelopment goals.



Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program is a federally funded program administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). This program, authorized under Title 1 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, provides funding to states, cities, and counties to support efforts to develop, stabilize, and assist urban communities with promoting suitable living environments, infrastructure enhancements, housing affordability and accessibility, and by expanding economic opportunities primarily for low- and moderate-income persons and areas.

Funding is allocated annually by Congress and distributed by HUD on a formula basis. As an entitlement community, Waterford Township has received direct funding to support identified programs and activities since 1989. The Township has received between \$320,000 and \$540,000 per year over time with an average of \$380,000 over the last ten years.

In addition to the CDBG allocation, the Township also has related programs potentially available to it. This includes a scaling Section 108 Loan program, the HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME), as well as other competitive grants.

Community Development Financial Institutions Fund (CDFI)

The Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) Fund allocates New Market Tax Credits to Community Development Entities (CDEs) to attract private investment to low-income communities. The CDFI Fund is administered by the U.S. Department of Treasury. Investments made by CDEs may be for the purposes of residential, commercial, industrial, and retail real estate development projects

Public Spaces Community Places (PSCP)

Public Spaces Community Places is a grant match program administered by MEDC that utilizes donation-based crowdfunding to generate public interest and raise funding to revitalize or create public spaces. By utilizing web-based donations, projects are accessible to anyone willing to make a donation in real time. This crowdfunding model engages the public as each person plays a part in achieving community improvements and instills community pride as residents become invested in their surroundings.

Federal Grants

Various grants are available at the federal level that could help fund the redevelopment and capital projects envisioned in the Master Plan. In early 2023, Waterford Township received \$750,000 as part of the 2023 appropriations act, often called omnibus spending to fund revitalization of the Drayton Plains area in advance of the Master Plan's adoption. The Township should continue to seek similar federal resources to fund the plan's implementation.

Incentives

The following is a list of incentives and related programs which can be used to encourage investment in the Township from the private sector. While sharing the same goal as those funding sources previously identified, incentives provide a means to support projects that further the vision of the **Waterford Township Master Plan** in collaboration with businesses, investors, property owners, and other community stakeholders.

Façade Improvement Grants

Façade Improvement Programs provide funding for commercial and mixed-use building facade rehabilitation and reconstruction. The goal of these programs is to reduce the deterioration of traditional downtowns, assuming that exterior improvements will stimulate additional investment in the area and attract additional customers. In Michigan, façade improvement programs are often administered by DDAs or similar entities – Waterford Township can consider establishing façade improvement grants to encourage rehabilitation of buildings if it establishes a DDA or CIA.

Signature Building Acquisition Grants

The Signature Building Acquisition Program, offered by MEDC, funds the acquisition and rehabilitation of vacant and underutilized buildings in downtown districts. Municipalities may also contribute funding to acquisition, allowing developers to lower overall project costs. It is expected that the developer will spend at least the amount of the acquisition cost to improve the building's interior.

Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILOT)

Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) is a mechanism that allows the Township to reduce the property tax burden of a desired business for a predetermined period. In this instance, a local taxing body and a property owner will agree to the annual payment of a set fee in place of the property taxes. Payments are typically made in the form of a fixed sum, but they may also be paid as a percentage of the income generated by a property. In addition, PILOT can also be a means of reducing the fiscal impact on the Township of a nonprofit, institutional use, or other non-taxpaying entity locating to a key site. While such uses can be desirable as activity generators, they can also negatively impact municipal services. Provisions can be made to offset that negative impact by allowing the Township to be compensated for at least a portion of the revenue that would otherwise be collected in the form of property tax. In 2023 Waterford Township has not used PILOT to facilitate economic development in the past.

Tax Exemptions

There are a number of exemptions allowed by the Michigan Department of the Treasury to assist businesses in the state wishing to improve their physical assets. Examples include New Personal Property Exemptions (affords a 100 percent property tax exemption for specific businesses located within eligible distressed communities) or Industrial Facilities Exemptions (provides a tax incentive to manufacturers to enable renovation and expansion of aging facilities, assist in the building of new facilities, and to promote the establishment of high-tech facilities). The Township should review and consider exemptions that may be applicable as part of development opportunities in Waterford Township.

Economic Development Planning Grants

Under the Planning and Local Technical Assistance program, the Economic Development Administration (EDA) assists states, counties, municipalities, and educational institutions in drafting economic development plans. The plans should be regional in scope, targeted to guide the economic development efforts of a community or region. The EDA also supports Partnership Planning investments that fund the development, implementation, revision, or replacement of Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS), which describe and prioritize regional strategic economic goals.



Parks, Trails, and Open Spaces

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) administers a variety of grant programs to help municipalities and other local agencies provide public outdoor recreational areas and facilities. The following are specific grant programs which the Township could utilize to implement parks, trails, and open space related recommendations of **Waterford Township Master Plan**.

Township Master Plan. It should be noted that this list does not include all grant programs offered by MDNR, but only those deemed most relevant.

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund grants are available to municipalities, counties, and school districts to be used for outdoor recreation projects. Projects require a 50 percent match. All funded projects are taken under perpetuity by the National Park Service and must only be used for outdoor recreational purposes.

Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF)

The Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund provides funding for the purchase of land for resource protection and public outdoor recreation as well as the development of outdoor recreation facilities. Development projects can range from \$15,000 to \$300,000 but there is no limit to grants for land acquisition.

Recreation Passport Grants (RPG)

Recreation Passport Grants are supported by the sales of the state Recreation Passport, which is required for entrance into state parks, recreation areas, and boating access sites. Grants are available to local units of government for development of public recreation facilities through the Department of Natural Resources. The program is primarily focused on renovation and improvement to existing parks; however, projects for the development of new parks are eligible.

Parks Foundation

Forming a Parks Foundation would provide additional support to park enhancements, recreational opportunities, trails, and open space preservation by raising funds to aid the Township Parks and Recreation Department as they work to maintain quality parks and provide recreational programs. A Parks Foundation generally consists of a Board of Directors and additional volunteers. In addition to monetary donations, a Parks Foundation could also find ways to provide professional assistance in the areas of legal, engineering, development, construction, and financial planning as in-kind contributions.

Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

The FHWA's Recreational Trails Program provides funding for maintenance and development of recreational trails and related facilities. This program is an internal process and local governments must partner with a state division to receive funding for a project.

Transportation and Infrastructure

Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)

The IIJA, passed in November 2021, is a comprehensive funding bill that provides around \$1.2 trillion for transportation infrastructure and jobs through 2026. It replaces the FAST Act as the primary transportation funding bill, but continues the federal Surface Transportation Program from the FAST Act. The IIJA provides \$550 billion of new federal spending that will be allocated over a five year period. The largest funding category consists of roads, bridges, and other related projects, but there are considerable amounts dedicated to transit, active transportation, and electric vehicle infrastructure. The IIJA is a great opportunity for the Township to fund traditional infrastructure projects and explore funding for projects that have not traditionally been covered by past federal legislation.

The historic funding provided by the IIJA will end in 2026 so, the Township should stay up to date on the development of new transportation funding acts to use as a potential funding source in the future.

Safe Routes to School (SRTS)

The Safe Routes to School program has provided funding through the U.S. Department of Transportation for various infrastructure-related projects including the planning, design, and construction of infrastructure-related projects that will substantially improve the ability of students to walk and bike to school, including:

- Sidewalk improvements
- Traffic calming and speed reduction improvements
- Pedestrian and bicycle crossing improvements
- On-street bicycle facilities
- Off-street bicycle and pedestrian facilities
- Secure bicycle parking facilities
- Traffic diversion improvements in the vicinity of schools

Waterford Township could consider the Safe Routes to School program to implement projects to encourage pedestrian travel to local schools as recommended in this plan.

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ)

Administered by the FHWA, the CMAQ program focuses on projects that provide solutions to regional congestion and air quality problems. Eligible project types have included transit improvements, commuter parking lots, traffic flow improvements, bicycle/pedestrian projects and projects that result in emissions reductions. In the past, these projects have been federally funded at 80 percent of project costs.

Michigan Department of Transportation Category A

The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), under the mission of maintaining the state's transportation network, administers the Economic Development Fund - Category A, designed to promote increased economic potential and improve the quality of life through support of job creation and retention in Michigan. County road commissions and municipal street agencies can receive up to 80 percent of the cost for transportation projects that will lead to private sector job creation. The project must be related to agriculture or food processing, tourism, forestry, high technology research, manufacturing, mining, or office centers of 50,000 square feet or more.

IMPLEMENTING THE LAND USE PLAN THROUGH ZONING

It is essential the Township's Zoning Ordinance aligns with the Land Use Plan within the **Waterford Township Master Plan** to ensure future development occurs as the community envisions. The Land Use Plan serves as the formal policy guide for desired development types and land uses, though it is not a regulatory document or a legally binding obligation of what must be done. The Zoning Ordinance, on the other hand, includes the legally binding regulations that dictate how properties can be used and establishes the permitted character of development to implement the land use policies of the Master Plan. The adoption of the **Waterford Township Master Plan** and its Land Use Plan establishes this land use policy for Waterford Township. The Master Plan should serve as a guide for updating of the Township's zoning regulations.



ZONING ORDINANCE UPDATE

Adoption of the **Waterford Township Master Plan** should be followed by an immediate review and update of the Township's various development controls, including the zoning ordinance. The Land Use Plan, including the Residential Areas Framework Plan and the Commercial Areas Framework Plan outline the desired type, location, and character of future development. It should be used to inform zoning regulations regarding appropriate uses, as well as building height, bulk, orientation, and intensity standards. Further, as the **Waterford Township Master Plan** is updated to address changes in community issues and priorities over time, the zoning ordinance should also be revisited to ensure it continues to work in unison with the Land Use Plan. This could involve adjustments to the zoning map to allow mixed-use development, changes to the types of residential formats or densities allowed, or alterations to building setbacks.

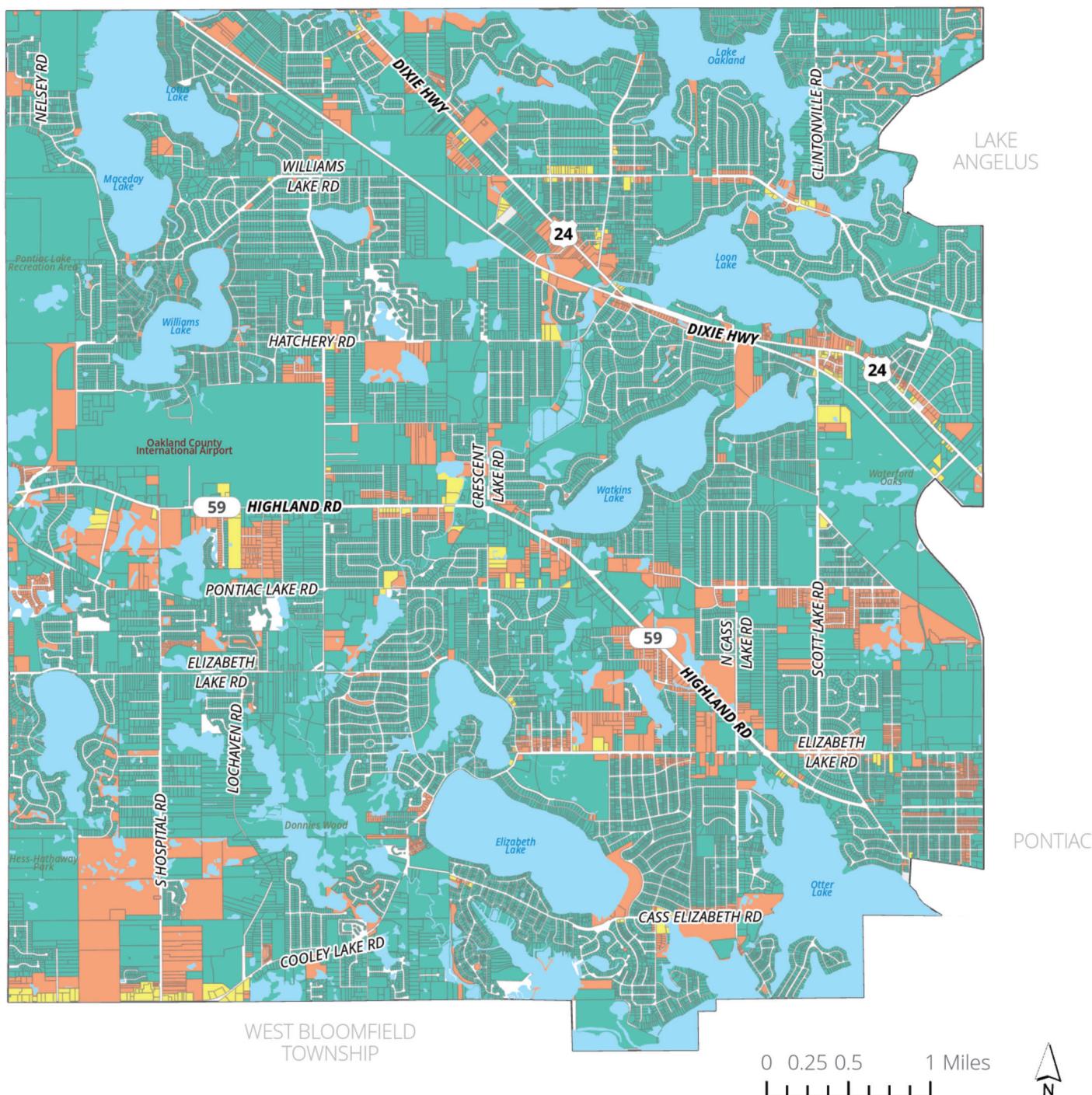
Land Use and Zoning Alignment

To establish an understanding of anticipated steps necessary in amending the Township's zoning regulations, and in accordance with the Michigan Planning Enabling Act; Act 33 of 2008, 125.3833 (2) (d), the following graphic highlights areas where Waterford Township's current zoning designations conflict with future land use as proposed within the Land Use Plan. The Township should utilize this analysis to help identify necessary amendments to the Zoning Ordinance to ensure it works in concert with the policies and vision of the Waterford Township Master Plan.

It should be noted that this represents only a preliminary analysis of general uses permitted within each zoning district. A comprehensive, thorough analysis should be undertaken before amending the Township's zoning regulations and district boundaries, including standards related to the uses allowed by district, bulk and dimensional standards, scale and design of development, buffering, and other elements.

The map that follows illustrates the locations where the Township's existing zoning and future land use do not align, identifying areas where zoning amendments should be considered to support the desired types of residential, commercial, or industrial development described in the Waterford Township Master Plan. The level of alignment was determined by comparing the intent of each future land use designation with the uses allowed, bulk and dimensional standards, and other dimensional standards defined in each existing zoning district.

Areas highlighted for misalignment between existing zoning and desired future development generally fall into one of the four following categories:



ZONING AND FUTURE LAND USE ALIGNMENT

Land Use Alignment Score

- Aligned
- Partially Aligned
- Not Aligned

This map highlights areas where existing zoning districts do not align with the proposed Future Land Use Plan. For example, an "Aligned" designation means that the existing zoning district accommodates the development recommended in the land use plan, while a "Not Aligned" designation means that the existing zoning district does not accommodate the development recommended in the land use plan.

- **Mixed-Use Development.** Mixed-use development containing commercial and upper-floor residential lofts is proposed in the future land use map along specific corridors including the Drayton Plains subarea, along Cooley Lake Road, and Elizabeth Lake Road. However the existing corridor commercial zoning does not accommodate this preferred type of development. The C-UB and C-UL Districts are the only existing districts that promote mixed-use development; however, their development standards require a more automobile-oriented rather than walkable development pattern, which could be updated to ensure better alignment.
- **New Mixed-Residential Development.** Mixed-residential development containing single-family attached and multifamily development is proposed in certain areas along M-59, sites along Telegraph Road and Elizabeth Lake Road, and along Airway Drive. Many of these areas currently have corridor commercial or single-family residential zoning that does not accommodate the preferred development type.
- **New Waterfront Commercial Nodes.** Commercial development that leverages the Township's frontage on waterbodies is proposed in several locations including properties with Pontiac Lake and Otter Lake frontage along M-59, between Loon Lake and Lake Oakland, and near the Clinton River. Many of these areas are within highway corridor zoning districts, which could be updated to better accommodate the pedestrian-oriented waterfront recreation development envisioned.
- **Single-Purpose Zoning Districts.** The Township currently has many zoning districts that serve only one purpose, such as the O-1 Local Office District and the O-2 General Office District. Many of these districts correspond with the Corridor Commercial designation in the future land use map, which encourages a flexible mix of office, service, and retail uses. The Township should consider consolidating single-purpose districts or broadening the types of uses allowed in them to encourage the flexible mix of commercial development recommended in this plan.

IMPLEMENTATION ACTION MATRIX

The Implementation Action Matrix offers a comprehensive list of all implementation strategies, policies, and recommendations contained within of the Waterford Township Master Plan. The matrix provides Township staff with a tool to prioritize implementation activities and projects over the life of the plan. In addition, the matrix allows the Township to approve specific, actionable items on an annual basis and evaluate progress based upon completed implementation strategies. The Implementation Action Matrix offers a brief description of each project and indicates the following:

Responsible Entities & Partner Organizations

Responsibility includes government bodies, civic organizations, private entities, and other associations that may be able to provide assistance with the identification strategy through coordination and cooperation. As applicable, lead responsibility groups should coordinate with potential partners to explore opportunities for collaboration to complete the identified recommendation.

Time Frame

'S' = Short-Term (1-2 years)

'M' = Mid-Term (3-5 years)

'L' = Long-Term (5+ years)

'O' = Ongoing (Requires immediate action and continued attention throughout the life)

Priority Level

1 = High-priority

2 = Moderate Priority

3 = Lower Priority

Zoning and Development Regulations

Recommendations for revisions to zoning and development regulation amendments are highlighted in orange in the implementation matrix.

The Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, Township Board of Trustees, and other boards and commissions should collaborate in the day-to-day administration, interpretation, and application of the Plan. Ensuring interagency collaboration will make certain that the changes proposed in the Master Plan are implemented effectively. Copies of the Plan should be made available to publicly download from the Township's website and as hard copies at Township Hall to provide the opportunity for all residents and stakeholders to understand the future of the Township.

Pg #	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Responsible Entities and Partner Organizations
Land Use Plan				
24	Land use types included in the future land use plan should serve as the basis for development review, approval, and future zoning amendments.	1	0	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
27	Target underperforming portions of commercial corridors with new multifamily housing developments that will serve to concentrate commercial activity in healthy nodes and districts and bolster support for retail with additional rooftops.	1	M/O	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
27	New commercial districts should provide strategically placed open space or parklets to give recreational opportunities and manage runoff.	1	M/O	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
29	Cluster development should be encouraged to reduce the amount of greenfield land developed during the construction of new neighborhoods.	1	S/O	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
30	Encourage waterfront commercial uses such as small-scale restaurants and retail establishments in Lakefront Commercial Areas.	1	S/O	Private Developers, Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
30	Consider requiring lakefront commercial sites to construct and maintain on site amenities tied to the lake water.	1	S/O	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
32	Encourage mixed-use development between a single and multiple floors that front directly on or near right of ways with off-street parking to structures' side or rear in mixed-use areas.	1	S/O	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
32	In mixed-use areas dining, retail, and entertainment uses should locate on first floors to generate pedestrian activity, while commercial service and residential uses should be allowed on upper floors to create a critical mass of visitors.	1	S/O	Private Developers, Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
32	Redevelopment in the Drayton Plains Subarea should include a mix of single and multiple floor developments featuring a mix of commercial and residential uses while retaining existing narrow lots and configuration of buildings with shared walls to promote a downtown setting.	1	S	Private Developers, Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
32	In the Drayton Plains Subarea, outdoor dining and the sale of merchandise should be promoted in structures' rear to provide an appealing location away from the traffic on Dixie Highway.	1	0	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
32	The Township should support housing choice through the provision of mixed-use development in the Drayton Plains subarea, Cooley Lake area, Union Lake Business District, and Urban Business District, in which housing should be provided in upper floors of structures with ground-floor commercial uses and by allowing townhomes, rowhomes, duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes in commercial corridors.	1	S/O	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
33	Ensure that key natural features are conserved as properties are developed.	1	0	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
29	Enhance the aesthetic quality of single-family neighborhoods and ensure the visual quality of properties.	2	0	Building Inspector, Township Staff
29	Multifamily and single-family attached housing should be sited and designed to create a cohesive neighborhood setting that allows for walking and biking and promotes an overall sense of place and identity.	2	S/O	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Board of Trustees
31	Encourage efficient access management and cross access easements in commercial areas to maximize parking facility utilization.	2	S/O	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees

Pg #	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Responsible Entities and Partner Organizations
31	Encourage the redevelopment of underutilized parking facilities and land into productive commercial uses.	2	S/O	Private Developers, Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
31	Encourage a flexible range of commercial development formats in commercial corridor areas, including plazas and visually appealing strip development.	2	S/O	Private Developers, Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
32	Accommodate expansion and/or redevelopment on existing industrial sites, but consider preventing the development of industrial sites on new land.	2	0	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
33	Public/semi-public areas should continue to be located throughout the community, however, concerns such as access, buffering, screening, and aesthetics should be addressed on an individual basis depending on context.	2	0	Board of Trustees, Waterford Township Public Schools, Waterford Township Public Libraries, Oakland County Parks and Recreation, Other Public Service Providers
34	Keep the airport in its current location along Highland Road and accommodate future renovations, site changes, and small-scale expansions.	3	0	Township Board of Trustees; Oakland County International Airport
34	Partner with the Oakland County Airport to program events, conventions, and other innovate, temporary uses.	3	0	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Oakland County International Airport

Residential Areas Plan

35	The Township should support reinvestment in its neighborhoods to improve the housing stock quality and community character.	1	0	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees, Building Official, Township Staff
35	The Township should proactively enforce the building code to improve neighborhood conditions. This includes ensuring proper removal of discarded furniture, inoperable vehicles, renovation of facades, and maintenance of lawns.	1	0	Building Official, Township Staff
36	Wetlands and mature tree areas should be preserved through conservation design. This can include cluster development, buffering, and other techniques that sustain natural elements to support the community's natural integrity and stormwater management.	1	S	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
37	The Township should enable a mix of residential formats on larger corridor sites in the way that serves developers and market conditions.	1	S	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
38	The Township should ensure its setbacks and dimensional standards encourage desired infill development by providing sufficient buildable area in the Drayton Plains Subarea.	1	S	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
39	The Township should develop hotel and lodging uses on the undeveloped greenfield site along Airway Drive south of M-59, given the proximity to the airport.	1	M	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
39	Proactive enforcement of building code and adjustments to fencing regulations should be considered to improve appearances in the neighborhoods immediately west of Crescent Lake.	1	S	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees, Building Official, Township Staff
35	The Township should promote neighborhood revitalization by educating residents on available grants, loans, and rebate programs from local, state, and federal agencies that would provide financial aid in home repairs and providing access to information on these resources.	2	0	Township Staff

Pg #	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Responsible Entities and Partner Organizations
35	The Township should explore funding sources for housing rehabilitation programs.	2	0	Township Staff
36	Consider establishing provisions in its subdivision ordinance to ensure that its natural features are preserved and properties in the west are developed.	2	S	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
37	Facilitate greater housing choice while retaining the quiet character of the community's neighborhoods that residents value. This can be achieved through "gentle density" increases such as duplexes within existing single-family areas and through the conversion of nonresidential sites in corridors to residential uses.	2	S	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
37	The consolidation of lots should be promoted where it would facilitate the conversion to multifamily development in corridors. New multifamily uses should be made to fit the corridor context through site amenities and buffering.	2	S	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
38	The Township should encourage and allow continued reinvestment and rehabilitation of lakefront homes, with large homes facing the lakefront being retained.	2	S	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
38	The planned recreational trail along Williams Lake Road should be added to enhance the area's appeal.	2	L	Residents and property owners, Public Works Department, RCOC
38	Duplexes should be allowed as infill development in areas near the Drayton Plains Subarea to support the goal of creating a critical mass of residents near the district.	2	S/O	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
38	Sidewalks should be added where they are not present to promote pedestrian access between neighborhoods and the Drayton Plains Subarea.	2	L	Residents and property owners, Public Works Department, RCOC, MDOT
38	Ensure that dimensional standards in the neighborhood immediately south of the Drayton Plains area allow for single-family housing and duplexes.	2	S	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
39	The Township will need to partner with the community to develop detailed planning concepts for the redevelopment opportunity at the Oakland Community College site to be sold after 2026.	2	M	Township Board of Trustees, Planning and Zoning Division, Oakland Community College
38	Consider adding sidewalks to the Warren Drive, Pauline Drive, Georgeland Drive, Crane Street, Bridge Street, and Frembes Road areas to increase the neighborhoods' access to the Drayton Plains Subarea and Waterford Kettering High School.	3	L	Residents and property owners, Public Works Department, RCOC
39	Consider installing sidewalks in the areas near Cooley Elementary School, the Drayton Plains nature Center, and Drayton Plains subarea to connect with these focal points and the proposed trails along Lakewood Drive and the Clinton River.	3	L	Property owners, Waterford Township Schools, Public Works Department, RCOC
39	Connections to future nonmotorized trails along Voorhies Road should be formed through the placement of sidewalks and pedestrian paths to ensure that the neighborhood has access to the trail.	3	L	Township Board of Trustees, Public Works Department

Pg #	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Responsible Entities and Partner Organizations
Commercial Areas Plan				
41	Sites along major corridors like Dixie Highway, Cooley Lake Road east of Williams Lake Road, and State Route 59 to Telegraph Road should be converted to accommodate a wider variety of business and residential patterns. The mix of uses should form appealing, cohesive spaces for residents and visitors to gather and incentivize the redevelopment of underused sites by diversifying the range of uses.	1	S/O	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees, Private Developers
41	For conversion of sites along major corridors multi-story buildings with ground-floor retail, dining, service, and entertainment uses, and upper-floor office and residential uses should be the typical pattern.	1	S/O	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees, Private Developers
41	Key lakefront sites with Waterfront Commercial future land use designations should be converted to food and drink, entertainment, retail, and other experiential business that allow visitors to access and enjoy these rich natural amenities to achieve the Township's placemaking goal.	1	M/O	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees, Private Developers and Local Businesses
41	Accessory outdoor dining and patio areas should be encouraged on lakefront sites with access to Pontiac Lake, Schoolhouse Lake, Loon Lake, and others to provide a unique experience and best take advantage of their location.	1	M/O	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees, Private Developers and Local Businesses
42	To facilitate the reuse of its future commercial and mixed-use corridor areas, the Township should seek to streamline its commercial zoning to create more consistent, flexible standards.	1	S/O	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
46	Redevelop the Cooley Lake Road area with three-floor mixed-use development including ground-floor commercial uses and residential lofts.	1	M	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees, Private Developers and Private Property Owners
41	For conversion of sites along major corridors, outdoor gathering spaces such as pocket parks and accessory dining should be added where feasible to enhance the area's appeal.	2	S/O	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees, Private Developers
42	As redevelopment occurs, the Township should encourage high-quality site design and amenities.	2	M/O	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
42	The addition of vegetated areas within and along the perimeter of parking lots should be explored to enhance the Township's sense of place by creating a sense of continuity with the natural environment.	2	M/O	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees, Private Developers
42	The Township should encourage sites to allow access for both motorists and nonmotorists as sites are developed. For example, the Township should require properties along planned nonmotorized trails to feature pedestrian and bicycle amenities that connect buildings with the adjoining street frontage.	2	M/O	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
42	Work with the Oakland County Road Commission and Michigan Department of Transportation to improve sidewalks and implement nonmotorized trails along Dixie Highway, M-59, and other major roads.	2	M/O	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Board of Trustees, RCOC, MDOT

Pg #	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Responsible Entities and Partner Organizations
42	The Township should ensure that its zoning ordinance standards are flexible enough to encourage redevelopment in the Dixie Highway, M-59, Cooley Lake Road, W Walton Road corridors.	2	M/O	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Board of Trustees
42	The Township should consider forming a Downtown Development Authority in locations planned for redevelopment, including the Drayton Plains Subarea area along Dixie Highway.	2	M	Township Board of Trustees, Township Staff, Residents and Stakeholders
42	The Township can establish special millages or selling municipal bonds to raise capital for implementation items and should consider such measures to support the commercial and industrial areas plan implementation.	2	M	Township Board of Trustees, Township Staff, Residents and Stakeholders
42	The Township should proactively seek grants to support the implementation of the commercial and industrial areas plan and search for opportunities to apply for federal, state, county, or foundation grants and to support private developers and residents in seeking these resources.	2	L/O	Township Staff
42	The Township can consider establishing matching grant funds to achieve Master Plan goals and objectives.	2	M	Township Board of Trustees, Township Staff, Residents and Stakeholders
44	New automobile-related uses along Williams Lake Road at Dixie Highway should be limited given the proximity to the Drayton Plains Subarea.	2	S/O	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
44	New dining uses should be prioritized on parcels with Schoolhouse Lake or Wormer Lake frontage.	2	S/O	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees, Local Businesses
45	The redevelopment of properties along Dixie Highway and Scott Lake Road should be encouraged over time.	2	S/O	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
45	Accommodate new commercial tenants and redevelopment on the site along Highland Road on Pontiac Lake. New dining, commercial, and entertainment uses should be encouraged.	2	S/O	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
45	Buildings should be situated with off-street parking along Williams Lake Road along Pontiac Lake and outdoor dining along the lake and streetscape elements, such as sidewalks and vegetation, should be added to function as a gateway to the community.	2	S/O	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
45	The Township should encourage the redevelopment of properties immediately south of the Oakland County International Airport. The rehabilitation of existing strip plazas should be encouraged where these properties can be reused. New development should complement and provide consistency with the airport site.	2	S/O	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
45	Commercial infill on the properties along M-59 immediately surrounding the Clinton River should be encouraged over time with new service, retail, and foodservice uses with particular emphasis on new businesses that serve users of the Clinton River Trail.	2	S/O	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees, Private Developers and Local Businesses
45	New development along M-59 immediately surrounding the Clinton River should be designed to promote access to the sites for both motorists and nonmotorists, with particular attention paid to access for pedestrians and cyclists.	2	S/O	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees, Private Developers
45	Appealing site landscaping and parking lot landscaping should be added as infill occurs in previously developed sites along M-59 east of Crescent Lake Road in site 12 of the Commercial and Industrial Framework Plan to screen the area from nearby neighborhoods.	2	S/O	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees, Private Developers

Pg #	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Responsible Entities and Partner Organizations
46	Existing residential uses should be replaced with new uniformly commercial uses along Tee Cee Court over time to create greater compatibility between the commercial, industrial, and residential uses and limit disturbance from noise and traffic in neighborhoods.	2	S/O	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
46	The commercial properties along Elizabeth Lake Road west of Doremus Avenue should be redeveloped over time with two-floor mixed-use development containing commercial retail and dining uses on the first floor and residential lofts and office uses on the second floor.	2	L	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Board of Trustees, Private Developers
46	A sidewalk should be added along Elizabeth Lake Road to connect the existing establishments, such as 4th Tavern Lakehouse, and off-street parking should be located to the rear or side of the new buildings to create a contiguous walkable environment.	2	M	Township Staff, Public Works Department, Property Owners, RCOC
46	The commercial properties along Elizabeth Lake Road, Highland Road, and Cass Lake Road should accommodate new commercial uses, prioritizing businesses that serve the community's recreational needs, and redevelopment of the sites with new buildings should also be allowed.	2	M/O	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees, Private Developers and Local Businesses
46	The south side of W Huron Street immediately south of Elizabeth Lake Road should be redeveloped with commercial ground floors and residential lofts on second floors to allow residents and visitors views of Otter-Sylvan Lake.	2	M	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
46	Develop a small commercial node along Cass-Elizabeth Road at Parkway Street. Existing dining and water-based recreation uses should continue to serve these purposes and new ones should be added.	2	M	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees, Private Property Owners
44	Commercial and Industrial properties should continue employment uses over time, and minor expansions on the same site should be encouraged to support their continued operation. Mature vegetation should be preserved.	3	S/O	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
45	The properties south of Dixie Highway and west of Scott Lake Road should continue to house commercial service businesses including office and retail businesses.	3	S/O	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
Parks, Recreation, and Natural Resources				
51	Continue to update the five-year Parks and Recreation Plan every five years to establish an up-to-date schedule of improvements to the park system.	1	0	Township Board of Trustees, Planning Commission, Parks and Recreation
51	Allocate and/or seek funding to renovate or replace the Waterford Township Recreation Center.	1	0	Township Board of Trustees, Planning Commission
58	Direct development away from sensitive natural resources including inland lakes, the Clinton River, floodplains, and wetlands.	1	0	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
58	Continue to protect the Township's existing wetlands to preserve water quality, stabilize stormwater runoff, recharge groundwater, and provide fish and wildlife habitat.	1	S	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
58	Encourage the use of native plant material to minimize the hazardous effects of invasive species in required landscaped areas.	1	0	Township Board of Trustees, Public Works Department
58	Continue to evaluate the on-site landscaping standards in the Zoning Ordinance for modernity and to enhance the specificity of the requirements.	1	0	Township Board of Trustees, Public Works Department
58	Maintain the Natural Features Setback requirements in the Zoning Ordinance and continue to evaluate whether the standards should be modernized with required vegetation.	1	0	Township Board of Trustees, Public Works Department

Pg #	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Responsible Entities and Partner Organizations
51	Extend the Clinton River Riverwalk along the entire length of the river and coordinate with outside partners to connect it to the Iron Belle Trail.	1	M	Township Board of Trustees, Planning Commission, Community Greenways Advisory Committee, Parks and Recreation, Neighboring Communities, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Oakland County
51	Develop new amenities and improvements at various Township parks to address evolving recreation needs as defined in the adopted five-year Parks and Recreation Plan.	2	0	Township Board of Trustees, Planning Commission, Parks and Recreation
51	Continue to gauge whether new mini parks and neighborhood-serving parks are appropriate in the Township as new nonmotorized trails and sidewalks are added over time.	2	0	Township Board of Trustees, Planning Commission, Parks and Recreation
51	Provide both passive and active facilities for a variety of ages and abilities of the population.	2	0	Township Board of Trustees, Planning Commission
51	Continue to work with existing recreation partners in the community to provide programs, leagues, and special events, and explore options for new and expanded partnerships to provide additional recreational opportunities.	2	0	Township Board of Trustees, Planning Commission
51	Encourage the development of pathways, sidewalks, and bike lanes to the Township's parks.	2	0	Township Board of Trustees, Planning Commission
51	Add walking and multi-use paths within existing parks and improve existing path surfaces.	2	0	Township Board of Trustees, Planning Commission
51	Add canoe/kayak launches at strategic locations.	2	0	Township Board of Trustees, Planning Commission, Property Owners
51	Work with local organizations to provide unique programming opportunities at the Township's recreational sites and other venues.	2	0	Township Board of Trustees, Planning Commission, Community Organizations
51	Preserve and protect open space and other important natural features in Waterford Township.	2	0	Township Board of Trustees, Planning Commission
51	Improve barrier-free access to existing recreation facilities.	2	0	Township Board of Trustees, Planning Commission
51	Ensure that improvements and upgrades to the Township's park facilities are accessible.	2	0	Township Board of Trustees, Planning Commission
51	Strive to meet universal design standards with new signage, park amenities, and facilities.	2	0	Township Board of Trustees, Planning Commission
54	The Township can consider updating its landscaping standards for modernity to ensure enhanced environmental performance.	2	S	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
55	Woodland management standards defined in Article 7 of the Township's Code of Ordinances could be modernized.	2	S	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
58	Promote conservation development techniques where mature vegetation and trees exist on select areas that can accommodate residential development.	2	0	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
58	Conserve woodlands to protect water and soil quality, increase air quality, buffer noise pollution, moderate local climate and storm hazards, preserve wildlife habitats, and preserve aesthetic values and community beauty.	2	0	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
58	Promote the preservation, protection, and diversification of trees and vegetation throughout the Township, and continue to evaluate whether the tree preservation standards in the Code of Ordinances should be modernized.	2	0	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
58	Encourage the preservation of natural site grades rather than alteration through grading to enhance stormwater management.	2	0	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees

Pg #	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Responsible Entities and Partner Organizations
58	Require the preservation and protection of groundwater recharge areas as open space or low-density uses to retain as much of the permeable surface and water holding characteristics as possible.	2	0	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees, Public Works
58	Monitor and control surface water runoff to prevent overloading of streams and long-term erosion resulting from uncontrolled, high velocity discharges and to promote runoff rates that occur under existing, undeveloped conditions.	2	0	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees, Public Works
58	Educate the community on the care and use of herbicide and fertilizer sprays to preserve and protect stream corridors, waterways, and their natural drainage and runoff patterns.	2	0	Township Board of Trustees, Public Works Department
58	Regulate, preserve, and protect the natural areas essential to maintaining Waterford Township's unique heritage and character and for providing high-quality and diverse wildlife habitat.	2	0	Township Board of Trustees, Public Works Department
Drayton Plains Subarea				
62	Increase the liveliness of the Drayton Plains Subarea by adding more housing within walking distance of a complementary mix of retail, restaurant, and service uses.	1	0	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
62	The Township should remain flexible and promote a variety of land uses to diversify consumer options, increase its tax base, and foster the desired energy in the Drayton Plains Subarea.	1	0	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
62	Consider introducing context-sensitive housing, such as duplexes, through infill development to promote greater housing choices within the Drayton Plains Subarea.	1	0	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees, Private Developers
62	In the Drayton Plains Subarea, multifamily can be located within upper stories of mixed-use buildings to help increase the range of housing choices in the area.	1	0	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees, Private Developers
63	Future Corridor Commercial developments in the Drayton Plains Subarea should possess buildings that front the roadways with parking located at the rear of buildings.	1	0	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees, Private Developers
63	Future Corridor Commercial developments in the Drayton Plains Subarea should provide sidewalks along roadways.	1	0	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees, Public Works, Oakland County Road Commission
63	Future Corridor Commercial developments in the Drayton Plains Subarea should possess adequate levels of ground-floor transparency and lighting.	1	0	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
68	In addition to removing excess curb cuts in the Drayton Plains Subarea, the Township should work with property owners to establish cross-access between non-residential properties.	1	0	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees, Private Property Owners
70	Increase sidewalk width in the Drayton Plains Subarea to increase safety for pedestrians. Looking at the sidewalk infrastructure along Sashabaw Road gives good context to what improvements should look like.	1	0	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees, RCOC, MDOT
70	Gaps in the sidewalk network should be filled.	1	0	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees, RCOC, MDOT
63	Future Corridor Commercial developments in the Drayton Plains Subarea should possess sufficient parking and perimeter landscaping.	2	M	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees, Private Developers

Pg #	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Responsible Entities and Partner Organizations
69	Key intersections, such as Dixie Highway and Frembes Road, should be enhanced to improve crossing conditions and build the Township's image while maintaining traffic flow.	2	0	Planning and Zoning Division, Public Works Department, RCOC, MDOT
70	Install wayfinding signage to Shell Park to better inform residents and visitors of this amenity.	2	0	Planning and Zoning Division, Waterford Parks and Recreation
71	To improve corridor circulation and access, potential traffic conflict points and disruptions in sidewalks should be reduced by either removing or consolidating excess curb cuts. This may be completed during roadway improvements or through the site plan approval process for future redevelopment.	2	0	Planning and Zoning Division, Public Works Department, RCOC, MDOT, Private Property Owners
72	Adding elements in the Drayton Plains Subarea, such as a pedestrian refuge island, medians with landscaping, and midblock crossings, would improve roadway's feel and function for pedestrians and make the environment more attractive to potential commercial tenants and new residents.	2	M	Planning and Zoning Division, Public Works Department, RCOC, MDOT
72	Roadway reconfiguration should explore strategies to calm traffic speeds along Dixie Highway. These may include narrower drive lanes and dedicate greater portions of the right-of-way to the pedestrian zone.	2	0	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees, RCOC, MDOT
72	Adding an off-street multi-use path on either side of the roadway could attract people to the Drayton Plains Subarea who would have otherwise driven.	2	M	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees, Oakland County Road Commission, Michigan Department of Transportation
73	The Township should leverage opportunities to create a trail connection between the Drayton Plains Subarea and the Waterford Riverwalk trail to the southwest.	2	M	Planning and Zoning Division, Public Works Department, Waterford Parks and Recreation, RCOC, MDOT
74	If developed, the vacant site across Dixie Highway from Drayton Station and the property at 4080 Dixie Highway should include safe pedestrian and bicycle access.	2	0	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees, Property Owners
74	As redevelopment occurs, density should be focused along Dixie Highway and tapered down as development approaches neighborhood edges	2	0	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
74	Additional amenities at Shell Park could be considered, including a space for food trucks which could be near the entrance off of Dixie Highway.	2	M	Waterford Parks and Recreation, Township Board of Trustees
Transportation				
87	Undertake streetscaping improvements along Dixie Highway as shown in the Drayton Plains Subarea chapter including the addition of raised medians, parkways, street trees, and multi-use trails to enhance the area's sense of place, promote pedestrian access, and calm traffic speeds.	1	L	Township Staff, MDOT, RCOC
87	Cooperate with MDOT as it continues to implement its active access management and traffic calming program along M-59.	2	0	Township Staff, Planning and Zoning Division, MDOT, Property Owners
87	Coordinate with MDOT and RCOC on future road improvements and resurfacing including the resurfacing of M-59.	2	0	Township Staff, MDOT, RCOC
87	Work with RCOC and MDOT to develop and maintain an annual review process to evaluate the capital needs for roads within the Township.	2	M	Township Staff, MDOT, RCOC
87	Work with RCOC to assess the feasibility of filling gaps in the sidewalk network and install streetscaping improvements along M-59 as planned improvements are made to the roadway, with priority given to the area adjacent to Pontiac Lake.	2	M	Township Staff, MDOT, RCOC

Pg #	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Responsible Entities and Partner Organizations
87	Encourage the consolidation and/or removal of curb cuts in the Drayton Plains subarea to improve the pedestrian environment and reduce traffic conflicts.	2	M/O	Township Staff, Planning and Zoning Division, MDOT, Property Owners
87	Work with RCOC and property owners to consider installing a road connection between thoroughfares such as S Hospital Road and Lochaven Road to serve new development in the area.	2	L	Township Staff, RCOC, Property Owners
87	Continue to engage residents about a potential sidewalk millage to improve the condition of the Township's sidewalks and fill gaps in the network over time.	2	0	Township Staff, residents
87	Consider strengthening the cross-access provisions in the Zoning Ordinance to require the construction of cross-access infrastructure when development or redevelopment occurs and specify minimum dimensions.	2	S	Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees
87	Consider prioritizing sidewalk connections in neighborhoods that connect between schools, recreational amenities, and other assets as new sidewalks are added over time.	2	0	Township Staff, Township Board of Trustees, Residents and Property Owners
87	Establish a nonmotorized transportation plan to further prioritize projects to maintain and enhance the Township's nonmotorized assets.	2	S	Township Staff, MDOT, RCOC
87	Create trail connections between pedestrian activity areas and nearby recreation areas, such as between the Drayton Plains Subarea and the Waterford Riverwalk to the southeast.	2	M/O	Township Staff, RCOC, Residents and Property Owners
87	Create a trail connection along Frembes Road, with connections along the Clinton River to provide a connection between Shell Park and the Nature Center at Drayton Plains.	2	M/O	Township Staff, Township Board of Trustees, Residents and Property Owners
87	Coordinate with OCIA to encourage innovative temporary uses of the airport site including events, conventions, and entertainment.	3	0	Township Staff, Oakland County International Airport

Community Facilities and Services

97	Continue to implement water service projects proposed in the Township's CIP including improvements to water treatment facilities, storage tanks, and pump, well, and pursue water main replacements.	2	0	Township Staff, Department of Public Works, Township Board of Trustees
97	Continue implementing strategies as recommended in the CIP to maintain the sanitary sewer system, including rehabilitation of sanitary sewer mains, manholes, and sanitary pump stations.	2	0	Township Staff, Department of Public Works, Township Board of Trustees
97	Investigate the need for water system upgrades in key areas where an increase in residential density is recommended in this plan including in the Drayton Plains area and along Cooley Lake Road east of Williams Lake Road.	2	M	Township Staff, Department of Public Works, Township Board of Trustees
97	Investigate the need for sewer system upgrades in locations where an increase in density is proposed including along Dixie Highway north of Williams Lake Road.	2	M	Township Staff, Department of Public Works, Township Board of Trustees
97	Continue to coordinate with OCWRC to ensure that stormwater is properly managed on-site.	2	0	Township Staff, Department of Public Works, Oakland County Water Resources Commission
97	Implement planned improvements to the Township police, fire, and other Township facilities as scheduled in the CIP.	2	M	Township Staff, Fire and Police Departments, Board of Trustees
97	Continue to monitor Township buildings, facilities, and equipment to identify necessary upgrades, replacements, renovations, and long-term maintenance projects, and undertake preventative maintenance. Incorporate improvements into the F&O Division's 20-year CIP.	2	M	Township Staff, Public Works Department, Township Board of Trustees

Pg #	Action	Priority	Time Estimate	Responsible Entities and Partner Organizations
97	Continue to coordinate growth and development with the Waterford Township School District to ensure adequate facilities to serve the community as new residential growth occurs.	2	0	Township Staff, Waterford Township School District
97	Consider installing pedestrian infrastructure in neighborhoods near Waterford Township School District facilities, including near Waterford Kettering High School and Knudsen Elementary School.	2	L	Township Staff, Department of Public Works, Township Board of Trustees, Property Owners
97	Investigate funding sources including Safe Routes to School grants as a funding source to develop sidewalks and bikeways that serve the Township's public and private schools.	2	M	Township Staff, Department of Public Works, Township Board of Trustees
97	Review the capacity of municipal buildings and facilities to meet community needs and identify necessary expansion or improvement projects to accommodate planned growth.	3	0	All Township Departments

Implementation

101	Ensure the Waterford Township Master Plan is updated every three to five years to address new issues that arise.	2	0	Township Staff, Planning and Zoning Division, Planning Commission, Township Board of Trustees, Residents, Property Owners, and Other Stakeholders
102	Consider forming a DDA as a funding source to implement tax increment financing to implement the Master Plan, particularly in the Drayton Plains area.	2	M/L	Township Staff, Township Board of Trustees, Residents, Property Owners, and Stakeholders

CONCLUSION

With thoughtful implementation and unwavering commitment, this Master Plan will lay the groundwork for a brighter future for Waterford Township, ensuring its continued prosperity and vibrancy over the coming decades. This Master Plan charts a course toward a more sustainable, equitable, and resilient Waterford Township – a community that embraces innovation while honoring its unique character.

This Master Plan is not simply a document. The Master Plan's success depends on the active participation of elected and appointed officials, staff, business owners and operators, and all members of the community. Through ongoing dialogue and collaboration, this Master Plan will evolve as a living document alongside the changing needs of the community.

WATERFORD TOWNSHIP MASTER PLAN

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